



RECORD OF WORLD EVENTS

REFERENCE

Volume 39 • Number 4

1993

• News digest for April

AFRICA

South Africa: assassination of Hani

• also including South Africa: death of Tambo and Treurnicht • Angola: resumption of peace talks • Mozambique: postponement of elections • Botswana: cabinet purge • Zaïre: new Mobutu-appointed government • Nigeria: presidential candidates • new governments in Lesotho, Mali, Niger and Chad • Sudan: peace talks • Eritrea: independence referendum • Kenya: release of World Bank aid

39398

AMERICAS

Unveiling of US fiscal 1994 budget

• also including USA: defeat for Clinton over economic stimulus package, convictions in King trial, ending of Waco siege • Cuba: private US aid • Jamaica: re-formation of Patterson government • Guatemala: prison riot • Brazil: plebiscite on monarchy • Peru: military show of force • Argentina: debt agreement • Group of Rio meeting

39405

ASIA-PACIFIC

Pakistan: dismissal of Sharif government

• also including India: ruling on dismissal of state government, investigation into Bombay explosions • Sri Lanka: assassination of Athulathmudali • Cambodia: withdrawal of Khmers Rouges from Phnom Penh • Taiwan-China: historic meeting • Hong Kong: resumption of talks between China and UK • North Korea: IAEA declaration of "non-compliance" • Japan: resignation of Foreign Minister, aid to Russia • SAARC summit

39412

EUROPE

Russia: Yeltsin's referendum success

• also including Russia-US summit • Azerbaijan: new Armenian offensive, UN statement • Georgia: Abkhazia conflict, alleged Russian involvement • Ukraine: economic crisis • Bosnia: Bosnian Serb rejection of peace plan, Srebrenica siege • Yugoslavia: Serbian endorsement of peace plan, harsher UN sanctions • Italy: referendums, new government • Spain: calling of early general election • France: new Speaker, government programme • Germany: ruling on forces over Bosnia • Turkey: death of Özal • EC: interest rate cuts • EBRD: annual meeting, criticisms on spending

39421

MIDDLE EAST - ARAB WORLD

Resumption of Middle East peace talks

• also including "closure" of occupied territories • fighting in southern Lebanon • Algeria: operations against Islamists • Libya: renewal of UN sanctions • Egypt: new Interior Minister • Iran: currency reform • Iraq: UN weapons inspection, sanctions crisis • Yemen: general election • GCC and Arab League meetings

39436

INTERNATIONAL

GATT: US-EC partial agreement on public procurement

• also including G-7 meeting on aid to Russia • OPEC: meeting with non-OPEC members • admission of Macedonia to UN • WHO: continuing controversy over Nakajima

39441

Monthly except in Aug.

LONGMAN



AFRICA

SOUTH AFRICA

Assassination of Chris Hani

The fragile process of negotiations on constitutional reform was again threatened following the assassination on April 10 of Chris Hani, general secretary of the South African Communist Party (SACP) and a member of the national executive committee (NEC) of the African National Congress (ANC). In the crisis which followed, with some anti-apartheid activists calling for revenge, the ANC made strenuous efforts to control the anger of its supporters. Making repeated appeals for calm, the organization insisted that it and its allies would adhere to the negotiations process but that the pace of the talks would have to be increased. Many commentators believed that the forceful authority shown by ANC leaders, in particular ANC president Nelson Mandela, had averted the possibility of uncontrollable civil conflict.

Hani, a charismatic figure, had enjoyed support from both militants and moderates, and was particularly revered by the black youth. An independent poll in November 1992 found that next to Mandela he was the most popular political leader in the country. He had joined the SACP and *Umkhonto we Sizwe* (MK—Spear of the Nation), the ANC's military wing, in 1962. He left South Africa soon afterwards for military training and later served alongside the guerrillas of the Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU) in their liberation struggle. In 1974 he was elected to the ANC's NEC, becoming its youngest member. He then moved to Lesotho where for seven years he directed MK guerrilla activities in the Eastern Cape. In 1987 he replaced Joe Slovo as chief of staff of MK, a position from which he resigned soon after his election as general secretary of the SACP in December 1991 [see p. 38663]. Since his return to South Africa in 1990 he had become a champion of the negotiations process, avoiding accusations of cowardice or betrayal because of his MK credentials. Following his death, Mandela described him as a "soldier for peace".

Arrests

Hani was shot as he stepped from his car at his home in Boksburg, a predominantly white suburb of Johannesburg. Janus Walus, a Polish-born emigré who settled in South Africa in 1981, was arrested within an hour of the assassination. He appeared in court on April 13 charged with Hani's murder, and was remanded in custody until May 12. Police said that they had found a "hit list" of assassination targets at his home, and that forensic tests on a pistol which they had found there confirmed that it had fired the bullets which killed Hani, and that Walus had fired it. They also revealed that the weapon had been part of a consignment stolen from the South African Air Force headquarters in Pretoria in 1990.

On April 12 the leader of the neo-Nazi Afrikaner Resistance Movement (AWB), Eugene Terreblanche, acknowledged that Walus had been a member of the AWB since 1986, adding to speculation that the assassination had been part of a white right-wing conspiracy. These suspicions were fuelled with the arrest of Clive Derby-Lewis, a prominent member of the Conservative Party (CP), on April 17 and confirmed on April 21 when police arresting his wife Gaye said that they believed that Hani's murder had been part of a conspiracy.

Clive Derby-Lewis, a serving member of the President's Council, had in 1980 become president of the Western Goals Institute, a London-based international anti-communist organization; he had been a CP Member of Parliament between 1987 and 1989. Gaye Derby-Lewis, a journalist on the CP's weekly journal the *Patriot*, was reported to have been a member of the CP delegation to multiparty talks in March [see p. 39350]. Police sources indicated that they had firm evidence to link the couple with the assassination. Both were detained under Section 29 of the Internal Security Act, providing for detention without trial for 10 days with the option to extend the period for further questioning.

Amid reports that more arrests would follow, two independent investigators arrived in the country on April 21 to assist the police. They were Commander George Churchill-Coleman, a senior British police officer and former head of Scotland Yard's anti-terrorist branch, and Ralf Kruger, former head of the Stuttgart-based federal bureau for criminal investigation in Germany.

Violence - Appeals for calm

Despite ANC appeals for calm, sporadic violence was reported in the first 48 hours after Hani's death.

In Cape Town, angry protesters chanted "No peace, war" and Peter Mokeba, leader of the ANC Youth League, urged the crowd to "kill a farmer, kill a Boer", a call echoed by Winnie Mandela, Nelson Mandela's estranged wife. Hani's assassination was also used by the Azanian People's Liberation Army (APLA, the armed wing of the Pan-Africanist Congress) to justify its position on the continuing use of violence [see p. 39350].

On April 13, the eve of a national day of mourning declared by the ANC, Nelson Mandela made a passionate call for racial unity in a live television broadcast to "every single South African".

Declaring that South Africa stood at a watershed, he condemned those who would "plunge [the] country into another Angola". His address coincided with a government announcement of the imposition of localized states of emergency in three regions in the Eastern Cape after buildings were set alight and police cars and police stations attacked.

With an additional 23,000 police and troops deployed across the country, there were signs that the ANC would not be able to control its angry young militants on April 14, when up to 2,500,000 of its

supporters took part in 85 events nationwide to mourn Hani's death. Violent incidents were reported at three of the demonstrations and up to 17 people were reported to have been killed, including three who died when police opened fire on a crowd outside a police station in Johannesburg. Cyril Ramaphosa, ANC secretary-general, however, played down the violence, saying that demonstrators had acted with great "restraint". He also expressed the hope that the tragedy would act as a catalyst, moving the negotiations process forward more purposefully to ensure the rapid establishment of a transitional executive council (TEC) and an interim government [see also p. 39256].

In the wake of the violence on April 14, the ANC revised plans for an immediate six-week period of mass action. On April 16 it announced that April 19, the day of Hani's funeral, would be another day of national mourning and that a mass action programme along the lines of that adopted in 1992 [see pp. 38948; 38991; 39037] would start on May 1. The campaign would focus on several demands including an end to violence, free political activity, the immediate installation of the TEC and a date for elections to be set by a multiparty negotiations forum.

Hani's funeral

On April 19, despite State President F. W. de Klerk's warning to Parliament that the country was threatened by civil war, the ANC largely managed to keep control of its militant youth. In perhaps the country's biggest strike about 4,000,000 people, around half the workforce, stayed away from work and more than 100,000 people attended the funeral service at a football stadium in Soweto. Few violent incidents were reported. The day's death toll was 25, including 19 people who were shot at random in Sebokeng township in a hit-and-run attack in the early hours. The ANC later suggested that the assailants had been members of the "Third Force"—agents provocateurs linked to the military.

In his address at the funeral, Mandela launched a savage attack on the government and security forces, holding them ultimately responsible for the assassination. He declared the government "illegitimate, unrepresentative, corrupt and unfit to govern".

ANC demands

On April 20, assessing events since the assassination, the ANC congratulated its supporters on their generally disciplined behaviour. It acknowledged that some elements within the organization and outside had not heeded calls for peace, but accused the security forces of responsibility for most of the deaths. It also repeated demands made immediately following the killing, calling for an election date to be set immediately and for multiparty control of the armed forces to be instituted before the establishment of the TEC. It argued that in the previous week, when the police had co-operated with community peace structures and international monitors, "the peace process had stood up remarkably well in the face of extreme provocation".

New SACP leader

The SACP announced on April 24 that Charles Nqakula would succeed Hani as general secretary of the party.

Nqakula, a former journalist, had worked on the *Daily Dispatch* in the Eastern Cape in the early 1980s and had been an active figure in the United Democratic Front (UDF), the anti-apartheid coalition operating within the country from 1983 to August 1991 [see p. 38377].

Multiparty talks

Under pressure to speed up the pace of the negotiations process, a 104-member negotiating committee made up of delegates from 26 groups held its first full meeting on April 26.

The first day's proceedings were, however, disrupted after several parties led by the *Inkatha* Freedom Party raised a number of procedural issues. There was considerable, unresolved, discussion on the name of the new forum. More significantly there was debate over whether the forum should set a date for a general election. It was finally agreed to accept an SACP proposal that a precise date for elections be set, but only after political violence had been discussed. The talks were then adjourned until April 30 to allow delegates more time to read the report of the 10-member planning committee which had met on April 1.

Death of Treurnicht

Andries Treurnicht, leader of the CP, died of heart failure on April 22 at the age of 72.

An academic and a minister of the Dutch Reformed Church, Treurnicht had been a champion of apartheid. He first entered parliament in 1971 as a member of the National Party (NP), and served as chairman of the powerful Afrikaner secret society, the *Broederbond*, in 1972-74. By the time he became a full member of the Cabinet in 1979 he was known as "Dr No" for bitterly resisting any reforms of the apartheid system. He left the NP to found the CP in 1982 in protest at the government's plans to extend the franchise to Coloureds and Indians. Although CP electoral successes meant that following the 1989 general election Treurnicht became leader of the parliamentary opposition [see p. 36880], he suffered a crushing defeat in the March 1992 whites-only referendum on political reform [see p. 38798].

Death of Tambo

While the ANC was still mourning the death of Hani, it suffered a further blow on April 24 when its veteran national chairman Oliver Tambo died as a result of a severe stroke.

A committed Christian, Tambo had been a close colleague of Mandela, the two men having established the first African law practice in South Africa in 1952. Tambo, who had risen to a leadership position within the ANC in the late 1940s, was one of the 156 anti-apartheid leaders charged with high treason in 1956. Following the banning of the ANC in 1960, he left the country to direct the ANC's activities from exile, becoming ANC president in 1967. He returned to the country in December 1990 and at the ANC's first congress inside the country in July 1991 [see p. 38324], having only partially recovered from a stroke, he gave up the presidency in favour of Mandela.

Allegations of arms embargo breach

The Swiss government on April 5 authorized the sale to South Africa of 60 single-engine Pilatus PC-9 aircraft in a US\$175,000,000 deal. It dismissed protests from the UN Sanctions Committee and the ANC that the planes could be adapted to carry weapons and that the sale was in breach of the 1977 UN arms embargo [see p. 28749-51].

Swiss government officials asserted that the planes were non-military, and that they had received assurances from the South African government that they would only be used for pilot training. They added that Switzerland, although not a UN member, would continue to respect the embargo.

■ Last article p. 39350-51; reference article pp. R21-22.

LESOTHO

New government

After the victory of the Basotho Congress Party (BCP) in the March general election [see p. 39351], the BCP leader Ntsu Mokhehle was sworn in as Prime Minister on April 2. At the same time King Letsie III swore allegiance to the country's new Constitution.

In his inauguration speech Mokhehle recognized that while the BCP had won all 65 seats in the National Assembly, it would be "unwise" to ignore the "sizeable mass" of people who had voted for the Basotho National Party (BNP) and other parties. He urged opposition parties to co-operate with the BCP to rebuild the economy and safeguard the nascent democracy. On April 7 he indicated that he would be prepared to include members of the BNP in various organs of government including the Senate (the upper house of parliament), which was made up of chiefs and nominated members. However, he was adamant that no BNP members would be co-opted into the National Assembly (the lower house). He rejected opposition claims that the country had become a one-party state, insisting that

New Lesotho government

Ntsu Mokhehle Prime Minister; Minister of Defence; Public Service
 Selometsi Baholo Deputy Prime Minister; Minister of Finance, Economic Planning and Manpower Development
 Shakhane Molhehle Trade, Industry and Tourism; Labour and Employment
 Ntsukunyane Mphanya Agriculture, Co-operatives and Marketing
 Lesao Lehohla Home Affairs
 Pakalitha Moisisili Education and Training; Sports, Culture and Youth Affairs
 Khauhelo Deborah Raditapola (f) Health and Social Welfare
 Monyane Moleleki Natural Resources
 David Mochoochoko Works, Transport, Post and Telecommunications
 Mpho Malie Information and Broadcasting (vacant) Justice, Human Rights, Law and Constitutional Affairs
 Women are denoted by (f).

the composition of the National Assembly had been determined by popular vote. Mokhehle presented his first Cabinet on April 8.

■ Last article p. 39351; reference article pp. R13-14.

NAMIBIA

Cabinet changes

President Sam Nujoma announced on April 15 changes to his Cabinet, which he said were aimed at promoting manufacturing industry. Hidipo Hamutenya became Minister of Trade and Industry, exchanging portfolios with Ben Amathila (who thus became Minister of Information and Broadcasting, and who was reportedly unhappy about his effective demotion, on which he had not been consulted).

Other changes included the appointment of Wilfred Emvula as Deputy Minister of Trade and Industry. His selection marked the first ministerial appointment from the newly created second chamber of parliament, the National Council [see p. 39226], which had been inaugurated in January.

Resignation of Mudge

Dirk Mudge, chair of the main opposition party, the Democratic Turnhalle Alliance (DTA), on April 4 announced his resignation as a member of the National Assembly.

Mudge, who had been a leading figure in various pre-independence administrations, attempted to dispel suggestions that his departure was related to the DTA's poor showing in regional and local elections in December 1992 [see p. 39226]. He asserted that the decision had been made for purely personal reasons and that he wanted to concentrate on farming. He said that he would formally give up his seat at the end of the budget debate, expected at the end of June.

■ Last article p. 39226; reference article p. R17.

ANGOLA

Resumption of peace talks

On April 27 Jonas Savimbi, leader of the rebel National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA), agreed to a ceasefire "in principle", fuelling hopes of a successful conclusion to peace talks between UNITA and the Angolan government which had resumed on April 12 in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire [see p. 39303 for abortive talks in February]. By the end of the month a 47-point "memorandum of understanding" was reportedly close to being signed. However, optimism was tempered by scepticism about UNITA's commitment to the deal and by continuing intense fighting.

The negotiations were chaired by Margaret Anstee, the UN representative in Angola, despite persistent UNITA demands for her removal [see p. 39350]. The nine-point agenda included the cessation of hostilities, the implementation of the May 1991 Bicesse Peace Accord [see p. 38180] and arrangements for the second round of presidential elections

[see pp. 39082; 39128-29]. With the mandate of the UN Angola Verification Mission due to end on April 30, the UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali warned the two sides (in a message delivered by Anstee) that a continued UN presence was dependent on a successful outcome to the talks.

Although the two sides appeared to have found several areas of common ground, a constant stumbling block was the issue of the cessation of fighting. UNITA insisted on a "suspension of hostilities" as opposed to the government's demand for an immediate "ceasefire". Dismissing the idea that this was merely a question of semantics, Gen. Higinio Carneiro, a member of the government delegation, maintained that UNITA was calling for a temporary truce and was not committed to a lasting peace. Savimbi's apparent volte face on April 27 was thus met with suspicion from the government delegation, which remained unsure of his position. Savimbi later spoke of moving "stage-by-stage" from a suspension of hostilities to a "total ceasefire".

Another area of fundamental disagreement was UNITA's occupation of large areas of the country. Speaking on April 28 Carneiro emphasized that the occupation was illegal and had been condemned by the UN Security Council in Resolution 811 [see p. 39350]. UNITA, however, made it clear that it did not intend to surrender territory seized since the renewal of hostilities in September 1992 until after the arrival of a UN peacekeeping force.

Continuing fighting

With intense fighting in Luena and Cabinda and in Cuanza Sul Province and renewed UNITA assaults on Kuito and Menongue, the Angolan Foreign Ministry on April 24 unilaterally announced the expiry of the "Triple Zero" clause in the Bicesse Peace Accord which prohibited both sides from purchasing military material and logistical support. A Ministry official said that UNITA had previously violated this clause when it received material from South Africa [see p. 39257].

In the absence of a secure ceasefire agreement and with the abandonment of the "Triple Zero" clause, representatives of the three observers to the peace process, Portugal, Russia and the USA, expressed concern that the conflict would escalate still further if the Abidjan talks failed.

■ Last article p. 39350; reference article p. R3.

MOZAMBIQUE

Postponement of elections

The UN Security Council on April 14 expressed "serious concern" over delays in the implementation of the peace process as it became clear that a multiparty general election, originally due to be held within a year of the signing of the October 1992 peace treaty [see p. 39129], would not take place as scheduled.

Adopting Resolution 818 unanimously, the Security Council called for the timetable for the implementation of the treaty to be finalized and for both sides to guarantee the freedom of movement and verification capabilities of UNOMOZ (UN Operation in Mozambique). On April 25 Aldo

Ajello, the UN Secretary-General's special representative, confirmed earlier warnings that elections would probably not take place before mid-1994.

Part of the reason for the postponement was the delay in the deployment of UNOMOZ forces to supervise the demobilization process [see p. 39303]. By mid-April only 154 of the peacekeeping troops, in addition to those guarding the transportation corridors to the coast [see below], had arrived. Moreover, problems in the financing of the operation were noted, with the UN having raised only US\$140,000,000 of the US\$332,000,000 budgeted for the peace process.

The operation had been further stalled by the withdrawal on March 9 of representatives of the rebel Mozambique National Resistance (MNR or Renamo) from the ceasefire and control commissions established under the terms of the peace treaty, thus halting preparation of the assembly points for demobilizing troops. Renamo claimed that the action had been taken because the government had not provided its Maputo-based officials with sufficient accommodation, transport or food.

On April 20 Renamo confirmed that it would not rejoin the commissions until these logistical problems were resolved. The rebel movement had earlier declared that its soldiers would not demobilize until it received international finance, and on April 7 Renamo leader Afonso Dhlakama said that his forces would only be instructed to report to assembly points when his organization had received US\$15,000,000 to support its political activities.

Withdrawal of Zimbabwean troops

Zimbabwean troops guarding the Beira and Limpopo corridors finally withdrew on April 14. Their departure, scheduled for November 1992, had been postponed until the positioning of UN peacekeepers along the strategic corridors [see p. 39303].

■ Last article p. 39303; reference article pp. R16-17.

ZAMBIA

Cabinet purge

On April 15 President Frederick Chiluba dismissed four key ministers from his Cabinet. While declining to give exact reasons for their dismissal, Chiluba warned that no member of the government was "indispensable or so powerful as to evade the country's collective verdict". He added that ministers had to be seen as clean both at home and abroad. Chiluba had come under intense pressure from the public as well as international donors to end alleged government corruption.

Those dismissed were Finance Minister Emmanuel G. Kasonde; Education Minister Arthur Wina; Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries Guy Scott; and Minister of Mines and Mineral Development Humphrey Mulemba [for their appointment in November 1991 see p. 38561].

In the resulting reshuffle Ronald Penza was appointed Minister of Finance. His position as Minister of Commerce, Trade and Industry was taken by Alfeyo Hambayi who was in turn replaced at the Ministry of Energy and Water Development by

Edith Nawakwi. Kabunda Kayongo was named as Minister of Agriculture, Simon Zukas took responsibility for the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries and Paul Kapinga became Minister of Mines and Mineral Development. Other changes included the appointment of Princess Nakatindi Wina as Minister of Community Development and Social Welfare. Dipak Patel became Minister of Youth, Sport and Child Development. His duties at the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting were taken over by Remmy Mushota who was also appointed Cabinet Spokesman.

Debt write-off

It was reported at the beginning of April that the US government had written off a debt of 59,000 million kwacha. A further 28,000 million kwacha would be cancelled if Zambia complied with a rights accumulation programme, and debts of 34,700 million kwacha were rescheduled for payment by October 2018.

Air tragedy

All 17 members of the national football squad aboard a Zambian air force De Havilland Buffalo were killed when the aircraft crashed immediately after taking off from Libreville, Gabon, on April 27, apparently because of engine failure. All 25 passengers and the five-member crew were killed. The squad was en route to Senegal where the national team, considered to be one of the best in Africa, had been scheduled to play a World Cup qualifying game.

■ Last article p. 39351; reference article p. R26.

ZAIRE

Birindwa government

In the face of domestic and international isolation, Faustin Birindwa, the Prime Minister appointed by President Mobutu Sese Seko in defiance of the High Council of the Republic (HCR—transitional legislature) in March [see p. 39352], presented his government on April 2. Described as a government of "broad national union and of national salvation", a notable feature was the inclusion of former opposition leader and Prime Minister Jean Nguza Karl-I-Bond [see pp. 39039; 39083] who was named as Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Defence. The appointments were immediately rejected by Etienne Tshisekedi, the HCR-approved Prime Minister.

On April 2 Mobutu, seeking to restore his legitimacy, promulgated the amendments to the Constitution (the Harmonized Constitutional Text) which had been adopted by the political conclave of pro-Mobutu parties in March [see p. 39352] and approved by the National Assembly on March 31. As a result the National Assembly, in theory dissolved in September 1992 [see pp. 39082-83; 39129-30], was declared one of the institutions of the transition along with the president, the HCR and the government. The changes also confirmed the right of the president to appoint the prime minister, and made

the government answerable to the president and the National Assembly, rather than the HCR. As expected the amendments were repudiated by the HCR and Tshisekedi.

Isolation of Mobutu regime

Mobutu's relations with Zaïre's three main donor countries, Belgium, France and the USA, as well as those with the European Communities (EC) continued to deteriorate.

On April 7 the EC refused to acknowledge the appointment of Birindwa or the changes to the Constitution, and instead reaffirmed its support for Mgr Laurent Monsengwo Pasinya, the HCR chairman. It announced the imposition of an embargo on arms sales and a policy of restricting the granting of visas, a sanction already adopted by Belgium and France.

The Birindwa government reacted angrily to these moves which it described as interference in the country's internal affairs. On April 16 two Belgian diplomats were expelled and on April 24 the National Assembly called for the severance of relations with Belgium and for the former colonial power to pay BF 370,000 million of debts contracted in the 19th century. While these demands were rejected by Birindwa, his Minister of Foreign Affairs Mpinga Kasenda warned on April 28 that the government would not tolerate continued external interference.

Request for UN intervention

On April 23 Lambert Mende, the Communications Minister of the Tshisekedi government, requested UN intervention in Zaïre.

The request, made personally in Belgium to UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali, followed the harassment of anti-Mobutu activists, including raids on the homes of Tshisekedi and several members of his Cabinet. Mende also voiced his government's concern at the outbreak of serious ethnic violence in the north of Kivu province. Mende told the Secretary-General that his government believed that the special units of the Zaïrean army, loyal to Mobutu, were implicated in attacks against the Banyarwanda (Hutu and Tutsi people originally from Rwanda) in which up to 1,500 people were thought to have been killed. He called on the UN to ensure the respect of human rights, to establish a commission of inquiry into the violence, to provide aid for future elections and to deploy a peacekeeping force to re-establish peace and security.

■ Last article p. 39352; reference article pp. R25-26.

CAMEROON

Calls for national conference

On April 6 John Fru Ndi, leader of the Social Democratic Front (SDF—the main opposition party), announced that the party was planning to convene a sovereign national conference. Fru Ndi, who had rejected the election of President Paul Biya in October 1992 and claimed victory for himself [see pp. 39130; 39179], said that the meeting would "prepare the country's political future".

On March 23 the government had announced that it would hold a grand national debate on constitutional reform by the end of May. Fru Ndi's announcement followed the expiry of an SDF ultimatum demanding that any decisions made at such talks be submitted to a referendum. He said that the government's refusal had been based on its desire to "consolidate its electoral coup d'état".

Apparent differences within the SDF emerged on April 14 when Bernard Muna, a senior party figure, declared himself in favour of the SDF participating in the government-sponsored debate. Although he dismissed suggestions of a split, he said that the SDF had yet to adopt a stance on the convening of a national conference.

■ Last articles pp. 39227; 39260; reference article p. R6.

NIGERIA

Presidential candidates

Following the abortive presidential primaries in 1992 [see pp. 39041; 39083; 39130], the two political parties finally chose their presidential candidates at conventions on March 26-30. Both candidates were Muslims and were reported to be millionaires.

Moshood Kashimawo Olawale "MKO" Abiola, a Yoruba press magnate from Plateau state, was adopted as the candidate of the Social Democratic Party (SDP). Bashir Othman Tofa, an economist from Kano with wide-ranging business interests, was chosen by delegates of the National Republican Convention (NRC).

While the elections were scheduled to take place on June 12, it was disclosed on April 8 that the National Electoral Commission had been given the authority to postpone the presidential elections indefinitely. The Lagos-based Committee for the Defence of Human Rights condemned this move as a "part of a grand design" by the military to remain in power.

Controversial fuel subsidy

In the face of persistent threats of strikes and riots, the government postponed on April 8 the removal of the subsidy on petrol, which had been scheduled for June 1 as part of a package designed to secure an agreement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF). An IMF agreement was intended to lead in turn to the rescheduling of the country's US\$16,000 million debt to the Western governments of the "Paris Club".

An official statement issued at the end of a meeting of senior members of the National Defence and Security Council chaired by President Ibrahim Babangida stated that the postponement was intended to avoid unrest in the run-up to the presidential elections. Chief Ernest Adegunle Shonekan, chairman of the Transitional Council, was reported to be unhappy with the move, which frustrated his plans to cut the budget deficit [see p. 39305]. The removal of the subsidy, which would substantially raise the price from the current US\$0.03 a litre (making Nigerian petrol, according to widespread belief, the cheapest in the world), would have

brought the government an increase in revenue of some N 41,000 million per year (US\$1.00=N 31.9158 as at April 6, 1993).

■ Last article p. 39305; reference article p. R18.

TOGO

Election timetable

On April 7 a meeting between President Gnassingbe Eyadema and the "crisis government" of Prime Minister Joseph Kokou Koffi adopted a new electoral timetable.

It was agreed that the first round of presidential elections would be held on June 6, with a run-off, if necessary, on June 20. Legislative elections were scheduled to take place over two rounds on July 11 and July 25. Other measures adopted included the requirement that each candidate in the legislative elections pay a deposit of 100,000 francs CFA, while the sum fixed for presidential candidates was 10,000,000 francs CFA (US\$1.00=270.631 francs CFA as at April 6, 1993).

The timetable received a guarded response from Gilchrist Olympio, chair of the Union of the Forces for Change and a leading member of the Collective of Democratic Opposition-2 (COD-2). He declared that his party would be willing to participate in elections provided that they were free and open. He specifically demanded that the army be confined to barracks under international supervision during the election period and that international observers should monitor the election process.

■ Last article p. 39353; reference article pp. R24-25.

CÔTE D'IVOIRE

Army discontent

A dispute over pay and conditions for members of the Republican Guard resulted in two outbreaks of gross insubordination within a week.

On March 29, 45 members of the elite corps took a commander and two non-commissioned officers hostage at the Presidential Palace in Abidjan in support of their demands for benefits and a pay increase commensurate with those of their civilian counterparts. The mutineers withdrew from the Palace on March 31 following a meeting with President Félix Houphouët-Boigny during which he promised to consider their demands. However, early optimism that the Guards had been appeased appeared ill-founded when gunfire was reported on April 4 from inside the Republican Guard garrison in Yamoussoukro and in the streets of the city. Witnesses said that up to 250 troops had swept through the city, firing in the air. Calm was only restored after several hours of negotiations between Defence Minister Léon Konan Koffi, the Army Chief of Staff and representatives of the Guards.

■ Last articles pp. 38899; 38997; 39260; 39309; reference article pp. R8-9.

MALI**Resignation of government**

The government of Prime Minister Younoussi Touré, appointed in June 1992 [see pp. 38951-52], resigned on April 9 following serious student rioting in Bamako on April 5 in which one person was killed and several dozen injured.

According to government sources university and school students, who had for some time been negotiating grant increases with the government, had abandoned their educational objectives and were making unspecified political demands. They attacked the National Assembly building, government offices and the offices of the ruling Alliance for Democracy in Mali (ADEMA) as well as those of other parliamentary parties. Their actions won the support of a number of unidentified political leaders, who, according to President Alpha Oumar Konaré, incited further violence and called for the military to assume power. The government responded by closing all schools in the capital and deploying the army to patrol the city.

Announcing his intention to resign, Touré said that he feared for the stability of the republic and for the "future of the democratic process" and expressed the hope that a new government would be able to restore peace and consolidate national unity. Touré's fears were shared by President Konaré who expressed considerable criticism of the students and their supporters.

New government

President Konaré named Abdoulaye Sekou Sow Prime Minister on April 12. Minister of State in charge of Defence in the outgoing government, Sow was reported to be "close" to ADEMA, although not a member of the President's party. On April 16 he presented a 22-member Cabinet, of whom 12 had served in the previous administration. Although dominated by ADEMA, the new government was also reported to include members of two opposition parties including the National Committee for Democratic Initiative (CNID), the second largest party in the National Assembly.

■ Last article p. 39307; reference article p. R15.

Principal Mali ministers

Abdoulaye Sekou Sow Prime Minister, Head of Government

***Mohammed Lamine Traore** Minister of State for Territorial Administration and Decentralization

Yoro Diakite Minister of State for Mines, Hydraulics and Energy

***Djonkouma Traore** Defence

***Mohammed Aloussine Toure** Foreign Affairs, Malians Abroad and African Integration

Amadou Dibate Justice

*Member of previous Cabinet.

NIGER**Controversial election of Speaker**

Following his election victory President Mahamane Ousmane of the Social Democratic Convention (CDS), part of the Alliance of the Forces of Change (AFC), sought to implement the power-sharing deal set up with other AFC parties prior to the second round of the elections in March [see pp. 39354-55]. Thus Moumouni Djermakoye of the Niger Alliance for Democracy and Progress (ANDP) was elected Speaker of the National Assembly on April 13 and Mahamadou Issoufou of the Niger Party for Unity and Democracy (PNDS) was appointed Prime Minister on April 17.

However, Djermakoye's election as Speaker proved controversial. Opposition deputies challenged the method of his selection, refused to put up their own candidate, and absented themselves from the Assembly chamber during the election. Rejecting the vote as unconstitutional, supporters of the National Movement for a Development Society (MNSD), the former sole ruling party, on April 14 staged a mass demonstration outside the National Assembly. Following clashes between AFC and opposition members, the Assembly session was suspended on April 15. On April 23 the Supreme Court, responding to a writ filed by the

New Niger Cabinet

Mahamadou Issoufou Prime Minister

Amadou Tahirou National Defence

Ousmane Oumarou Interior

Abdourahamane Hama Foreign Affairs and Co-operation

Abdallah Boureima Finance and Planning

Souley Abdoulaye Commerce, Transport and Tourism

Gado Fomakoye Mines and Energy

Mahamane Koullou Public Health

Amadou Laouali Equipment, Housing and Territorial Development

Mariama Ali (f) Social Welfare, Population and Women

Emoud Effad Industry and Handicrafts

Djibo Garba Secondary and Higher Education and Research

Madougou Salissou Civil Service, Labour and Employment

Moctar Diallo Relations with Parliament and Government Spokesman

Massaoudou Hassoumi Culture, Youth and Sports

Mallam Adam Kandine Justice and Keeper of the Seals

Djoulde Sadio Agriculture and Animal Husbandry

Soumana Billo Water Supply and Environment

Mohamed Ibrahim Ibba Administrative Reform and Decentralization

Ten secretaries of state with Cabinet status were also appointed.

Women are indicated by (f).

MNSD, declared that the proceedings had been in breach of the Constitution and nullified Djermakoye's election. A new date for a fresh election was expected to be set by the Assembly following the resumption of its deliberations on April 26.

New government

Accepting the post of Prime Minister, Issoufou on April 18 declared that he would form a "war Cabinet" to combat the economic and social crisis. He presented his government on April 23.

■ Last article pp. 39354-55; reference article pp. R17-18.

CHAD**Beginning of transition period**

The National Conference which began on Jan. 15 [see pp. 39259; 39307; 39355] concluded on April 7 following the adoption of a transitional charter and the election of Fidèle Moungar as transitional Prime Minister. The transition period, set for 12 months with the

Chad transitional government

Fidèle Moungar Prime Minister

***Mahamat Ali Adoum** Foreign Affairs

Valentin Neatobei Interior and Security

Elie Romba Justice and Keeper of the Seals

***Ibn Oumar Mahamat Saleh** Planning and Co-operation

Ahmat Allabo Posts and Telecommunications

Robert Roingam Finance and Computer Services

Mahamet Saleh Ahmat Agriculture

Delwa Kassire Koumakoye

Communications and Freedoms
Abdelkader Wadal Kamougue Civil Service and Labour

Saleh Kebzabo Commerce and Industrial Development

Moustapha Ali Alifei Livestock and Animal Resources

Gali Gatta Ngothe Higher Education

Abderrahman Koulamallah Public Works and Transport

Salifou Garba Mines, Energy and Water Resources

Mahamat Nouri Public Health

Ngarbatina Carmele (f) Social and Women's Affairs

Joseph Koumagoto National Education and Culture

Younis Ibedou Youth and Sports

Hassan Kittir Environment and Tourism

Moussa Adoum Administrative Reform

Loum Laina Minister Delegate in charge of National Defence, War Veterans and War Victims

*No change.

Five secretaries of state with Cabinet status were also appointed.

Women are denoted by (f).

possibility of one extension, came into effect on April 9.

Under the terms of the transitional charter President Idriss Déby would remain as head of state and C.-in-C. of the Armed Forces during a period leading to multiparty elections. Moungar, as head of the transitional government, would ensure the implementation of the economic, political and social programmes drawn up by the conference. Speaking on April 7, Moungar, a surgeon and the outgoing Minister of Education, identified the protection of human rights and security issues as two of his priorities. He also expressed confidence that he and Déby could work together.

The charter also provided for the establishment of an interim legislature, the Higher Transitional Council (CST), whose 57 members were elected by conference delegates. On April 8 Lol Mahamat Choua was elected chairman of the CST by its members. Choua, leader of the *Rassemblement pour la démocratie et le progrès* (RDP), had briefly been President, from April to November 1979 [see pp. 30066-67, where his name is given as Lol Mohamed Shawwa], and had served as a minister under former President Hissène Habré.

Moungar announced details of the transitional government on April 12.

■ Last article p. 39355; reference article pp. R7-8.

SUDAN

Peace talks

The government began peace talks with two factions of the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) in April.

Following preliminary discussions in Abuja, Nigeria, on April 8, when it was agreed to maintain the ceasefire declared in March [see p. 39355], substantive talks between the government and the SPLA's Torit faction began in the Nigerian capital on April 26. Despite earlier promises, Torit faction leader John Garang failed to attend the talks and the Torit delegation was led by Silva Wiir. Chief representative on the government side was Minister of Economic Planning and Investment Ali el Hajj Mohammad. The negotiations, which were reported to be making slow progress, continued into May.

Meanwhile, on April 23, in Nairobi, Kenya, a government delegation met with representatives of the SPLA-United, an alliance of three of the rebel factions formed on April 5. The new group brought together under the leadership of Riek Machar, his Nasir faction, the "Forces of Unity" faction of William Nyuon Bany, and the faction led by Carabino Kuany Bol.

In a previous joint statement issued on April 5 the three factions had stated their belief that there could be no military solution to the conflict, asserted their commitment to a comprehensive peace settlement and declared an immediate unilateral ceasefire. These statements were confirmed during the meeting with the government in the Kenyan capital, where the three reaffirmed their commitment to the terms of the Abuja peace conference in May-June 1992 [see pp. 38901; 38952]. The two sides agreed to resume discussions in early May.

Arrest of former Prime Minister

Former Prime Minister Sadiq el-Mahdi, who was ousted by the military in 1989 [see p. 36728], was arrested on April 5 and kept in custody for 24 hours. Mahdi had delivered a *qutba* (sermon) at the Khalifa mosque in Omdurman during the *Id al-Fitr* festival at the end of March, in which he attacked the government, particularly its economic performance.

■ Last article p. 39355; reference article p. R23.

ERITREA

Independence referendum

The people of Eritrea voted overwhelmingly in favour of independence from Ethiopia in a referendum on April 23-25. Results of the UN-monitored vote showed that 99.8 per cent of voters (in a turnout of 98.2 per cent) responded positively to the question "Do you want Eritrea to be independent?". Only 1,882 people voted "No".

The vote marked the end of a 30-year independence struggle, waged first against the regime of Emperor Haile Selassie and from 1974 to 1991 against the regime of President Mengistu Haile Mariam. Following the fall of Mengistu in May 1991, Eritrea had functioned as an autonomous region, with the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) establishing a provisional government [see pp. 38174-75]. The formal declaration of independence was set to take place on May 24, the second anniversary of the fall of Mengistu.

■ Last article p. 39356 (under Ethiopia); reference article p. R10 (under Ethiopia); separate reference data for Eritrea will be published in the May 1993 issue marking formal independence.

ETHIOPIA

Parliamentary expulsions

The Council of Representatives, the transitional legislature which was dominated by the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary and Democratic Front (EPRDF), on April 2 suspended from membership of the Council five of the 10 parties making up the Southern Ethiopian People's Democratic Union (SEPDU).

The SEPDU parties had taken part in an opposition "Peace for Ethiopia" conference in Paris at the end of March, which approved resolutions concluding that there was no law and order in the country and rejecting the transitional process as inappropriate. As soon as the conference ended the Council condemned SEPDU for criticizing the transitional government while participating in it, and called on its members to clarify their position. As a result five of the 10 SEPDU parties rejected the Paris conference's resolutions, but the other five—the Sidama Liberation Movement (SLM), the Oromo People's Democratic Organization (OPDO), the Yem Nationality Movement (YNM), the Hadiya People's Democratic Organization (HPDO) and the Gedeo People's Democratic Organization

(GPDO)—refused to do so. Between them, these five parties held eight of the 87 seats in the Council of Representatives. The status of the two vice-ministers from these parties was not known.

■ Last article pp. 39355-56; reference article p. R10.

KENYA

Unfreezing of World Bank aid

The World Bank agreed on April 21 to release foreign aid worth about US\$350,000,000 annually, which had been frozen in November 1991 when donors decided that aid payments should be dependent on political and economic reform [see p. 38563]. The first payment of some \$85,000,000 was expected to be delivered by the end of the month. The decision followed a series of measures by the Kenyan government to tighten financial control.

In March the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank and Western aid donors, meeting in London, had insisted that balance-of-payments support would remain in abeyance until the government had fulfilled a number of economic conditions, including raising interest rates, drastically reducing civil service expenditure, and controlling the money supply. These demands had met with a hostile response from President Daniel arap Moi [see p. 39356]. However, in April his government took a number of conciliatory steps.

On April 15 the operations of one of the country's main local banks, Trade Bank, were suspended and several of its officials were arrested. Finance Minister Musalia Mudavadi insisted that the reason for the Central Bank of Kenya (CBK) having taken over the bank's affairs was that auditors had revealed "liquidity constraints", and "weak internal controls and violations of the banking act". However, it was widely believed that the action was related to assurances given to IMF and World Bank officials that banks with connections with the political establishment, of which Trade Bank was one, would no longer be allowed overdrafts with the CBK. In a further attempt to control the banking industry, on April 19 Mudavadi appointed CBK fund managers to protect funds in 12 "weak" financial institutions.

On April 20 the Kenyan shilling was devalued by 23.47 per cent (US\$1.00=KSh 59.0072 as at April 21 compared with US\$1.00=KSh 45.160 as at April 20—see p. 39304 for February devaluation). The measure complied with donor demands to curb money supply which had risen 35 per cent in 1992.

Official parliamentary opposition

The Speaker of the National Assembly on April 8 declared FORD-Asili the official opposition party and its chairman Kenneth Matiba leader of the opposition, disregarding a declaration signed by 51 opposition MPs supporting Oginga Odinga, of FORD-Kenya, as opposition leader. The ruling ended several weeks of wrangling between the two parties, each with 31 parliamentary seats [see p. 39254].

Opposition arrests

Raila Odinga, a FORD-Kenya MP, and four others were arrested on April 6 for taking part in an alleged illegal demonstration. However, other demonstrators, including Paul Muite and James Orengo—also senior FORD-Kenya figures—were allowed to finish the demonstration unimpeded.

New Chief Justice

Fred Kwasi Apaloo, a Ghanaian national, assumed the position of Chief Justice on the retirement of Alan Hancox on April 1. His appointment marked the end of United Kingdom government funding of the post.

■ Last article p. 39356; reference article p. R13.

TANZANIA**Muslim disturbances**

On April 25 the government expelled three Sudanese nationals. Explaining the decision, Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Augustine Lyatonga Mrema said that the three, Muslim teachers at an Islamic school in Morogoro, 175 km east of the capital Dar es Salaam, had promoted Islamic fundamentalism and plotted to stage a *jihād* (holy war) against the government in order to install an Islamic regime.

The expulsions came after a wave of Muslim disturbances across the country which prompted strong condemnation from President Ali Hassan Mwinyi, who pledged that the full powers of the state would be used to crush fundamentalism. During the month more than 50 people were arrested following a series of attacks on pork butchers; they faced charges of incitement and holding illegal demonstrations. On April 18 Kasim Bin Juma, *imam* of a mosque in Dar es Salaam, was arrested in connection with the attacks. According to local radio reports he was accused of incitement and plotting to overthrow the government.

Cabinet changes

On April 13 Mwinyi created a new ministry of Legal and Constitutional Affairs with Samuel Sitta at its head. He also appointed Juma Hamad Umar as Minister of Tourism, National Resources and Environment, replacing A. Mgunia.

Multiparty by-election

The ruling *Chama Cha Mapinduzi* (CCM—Revolutionary Party of Tanzania) won a landslide victory in a Zanzibar by-election, the first election to be conducted on a multiparty basis, after the introduction of a multiparty system in June 1992 [see p. 38949]. Radio Tanzania reported on April 19 that the CCM candidate had taken 89 per cent of votes cast. However, observers noted that several opposition parties including the Civil United Front (CUF) had withdrawn from the race, citing harassment and unfair electoral practices.

■ Last articles pp. 39134; 39260; 39309; reference article p. R24.

RWANDA**Continuing peace talks**

Peace talks between the government and representatives of the rebel Rwandan Patriotic Front (FPR), which focused on security issues [see pp. 39351-52], made slow progress in April.

Although the two sides agreed on the formation of the high command of the new integrated national army, talks were stalled over the composition of the force itself—the FPR apparently rejected the government proposal that FPR members should make up 25 per cent of the new army. There was also disagreement over the gendarmerie/police, with the government insisting that the force retain the name “gendarmerie” and remain under the control of the Ministry of Defence, while the FPR demanded that it be called the “police” and be supervised by the Ministry of the Interior. However, the two sides did agree on the need for the establishment of a UN international peacekeeping force to oversee the transition period. According to the agreement reached on April 6, this force would guarantee general security and facilitate humanitarian assistance. It would also oversee the demobilization of the two rival armies and supervise the training of the new national army.

Extension of government's term

The term of office of the transitional government, which had been due to end on April 1—a year after its formation [see p. 38852]—was extended for three months on April 13. The five parties in the government agreed that peace talks should be completed within that time.

■ Last article pp. 39351-52; reference article pp. R18-19.

SEYCHELLES**Cabinet changes**

In early April President France-Albert René reshuffled his Cabinet; among various changes, he himself relinquished control of Defence to James Michel, and also exchanged his Industry portfolio for that of Community Development (controlling land and housing matters) hitherto held by Esme Jumeau.

Michel, who retained his other responsibilities as Minister of Finance and of Information, had been Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces until November 1992, when he gave up the position as part of a programme aimed at separating the ruling Seychelles People's Progressive Front from the military.

Continuing constitutional debate

The three-month mandate of the constitutional commission, due to end on April 30, was extended in late April. The commission had reconvened in January following the rejection of its draft constitution in a referendum in November 1992 [see p. 39183]. The Democratic Party, which had withdrawn from the

commission in September 1992, had since January participated fully in its sessions.

■ Last article p. 39183; reference article p. R20.

AFRICA**Trial of Bob Denard**

Bob Denard, on trial in Paris on charges of murder and theft relating to the assassination in November 1989 of President Ahmed Abdallah Abderrahman of the Comoros [see pp. 37033-34], was released on bail on April 5, after being convicted of criminal association in a separate case concerning the recruitment of French mercenaries for an attempted coup in Benin in 1977 [see pp. 28268; 28444].

Denard, a French national, had been sentenced in absentia to five years' imprisonment in October 1991 on the charges relating to Benin, but this sentence had been suspended following his return from self-imposed exile on Feb. 1, 1993 [see p. 39309]. Speaking on April 6, he claimed that his mercenary activities had had the blessing of the French intelligence service which had actually ordered some operations, including that in Benin.

Improved food situation

The UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) on April 22 reported that food production in several African countries had improved and predicted a reduction of commercial food imports and of emergency needs in most of sub-Saharan Africa.

The FAO forecast a significant increase in the production of wheat and coarse grain, from 56,000,000 tonnes in 1992 to 63,000,000 tonnes in 1993, largely attributable to improved weather. However, the agency warned that areas of famine remained as a result of civil strife and regional drought. Somalia would need 200,000 tonnes of food for 2,500,000 people by the end of August, while 320,000 tonnes of food would be needed to feed 2,800,000 people in Sudan until the end of the year.

IN BRIEF

BENIN: Serious violence was reported in Porto Novo on April 16-18 after adherents of the Zangbeto cult accused local Muslims of having desecrated their idol; the city had returned to calm by April 19, dispelling fears of a sustained outbreak of religious conflict.

BURUNDI: On April 17 President Pierre Buyoya signed electoral decrees setting June 1 for the date of the first round of presidential elections, with a second round, if required, on June 11 and legislative elections on June 29.

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC: Simon Feikoumon resigned as Minister of Public Health on April 16, blaming delays in the political reform process; earlier, on April 3, the first round of presidential and legislative elections was rescheduled for May 30 [see p. 39305 for earlier post-

ponement and p. 39130 for cancellation of elections in October 1992].

COMOROS: On April 25 the Court for the Security of the State passed death sentences on nine people found to have taken part in a coup attempt in September 1992 [see p. 39086]; the condemned included Lt. Abderamane Abdallah and Lt. Cheikh Abdallah, sons of former President Ahmed Abdallah Abderrahman who had himself been assassinated in November 1989 [see pp. 37033-34].

THE GAMBIA: The death sentence was officially abolished on April 7 in a move described by Vice-President Saihou S. Sabally as in line with the government's commitment to human rights; he added that 87 death sentences had been passed

since independence in 1965, but that only one person had been executed.

MADAGASCAR: At his first Council of Ministers meeting since his election in February [see pp. 39308-09], President Albert Zafy on April 17 announced diplomatic recognition of Israel, South Africa and South Korea.

ZIMBABWE: The launch of the Forum Party was reported in early April: led by Enoch Dumbutshena, a former Chief Justice, the party brought together intellectuals and business people, both Shona and Ndebele, as well as a number of white liberals.

AMERICAS

UNITED STATES

Unveiling of fiscal 1994 budget

President Bill Clinton on April 8 unveiled the details of his \$1,517,000 million budget for fiscal 1994 (beginning in October 1993). In a reversal of the usual budgetary sequence, the detailed budget was presented after Congress had already passed a budget resolution which had established the totals for revenues and the broad categories of spending, on the basis of the outline economic plan presented by Clinton in February [see pp. 39309-10]. The detailed budget remained broadly within these limits, with spending targeted towards investment in infrastructure, civilian technology, and training and education, and tax increases proposed for companies and high-income individuals and on energy consumption.

The Director of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), Leon Panetta, described the budget as a serious attempt to tackle the country's huge budget deficit by cutting it in stages from 5.2 per cent of gross national product (GNP) in fiscal 1993 to 2.8 per cent in 1997.

The figures contained in the budget envisaged a fall in spending from \$1,533,000 million in fiscal 1993 to \$1,517,000 million in fiscal 1994, but a gradual increase in subsequent years, to \$1,820,000 million by fiscal 1998. Revenue would rise from \$1,251,000 million in 1994 to \$1,530,500 million by 1998. The deficit would fall to \$214,000 million in 1997, before beginning to rise once more to \$250,000 million in 1998.

In order to make the budget entirely compatible with the budget resolution passed by Congress, however, it was estimated that the President would have to find additional savings of around \$65,000 million. There was no indication within the detailed 1994 proposals of where such savings were to be found, nor was there any clear provision for funding the sweeping health care reforms which the Clinton administration was expected to unveil in the near future.

Clinton's budget provided for the raising of \$328,000 million in new taxes over a five-year period. This was to be achieved largely through increasing the top rate of income tax from 31 per cent to 36 per cent for single tax payers with a taxable income of more than \$115,000, and to 39.6 per cent for those with incomes in excess of \$250,000. The corporate income tax rate was set to rise to 36 per cent for companies with incomes above \$10,000,000 per annum. A new energy tax was to be levied at the rate of 25.7 cents per million British thermal units (BTU) on most forms of energy, and of 59.9 cents per million BTUs on oil products. Most renewable fuels were to be exempt from the new tax, and central heating oil was to be taxed only at the basic 25.7 cents per million BTUs rate.

Other budget details

The main points of the 1994 budget on a departmental basis were as follows.

Agriculture. Cuts totalling \$900 million were proposed in the \$68,000 million budget of the Agriculture Department in 1994.

Commerce. The Commerce Department's budget of \$3,500 million represented the largest departmental increase on a percentage basis—15 per cent above the 1993 figure—largely as a result of increased spending on research and technology programmes intended to strengthen US industrial competitiveness.

Defence. The 1994 defence budget, containing \$263,000 million in budget authorization and \$277,000 million in actual spending, made modest personnel reductions but deferred all decisions on the scrapping of major weapons programmes until the following year. Some \$2,500 million was to be cut from the Strategic Defence Initiative (SDI) anti-missile system, although the largest savings, \$5,800 million, were to come from economies in procurement.

Education. Although projected spending remained at around the \$30,000 million level contained within the last Bush budget, Clinton's education plans included a new lending programme to cut the cost of student loans, and a national service programme [see p. 39358].

Energy. The energy budget contained an unprecedented \$6,550 million for environmental restoration and waste management at the department's nuclear weapons plants. This was almost as much as the \$6,650 million to be spent on weapons development and other defence-related activities by the Energy Department.

Health and Human Services. The budget was increased from \$592,000 million in 1993 to \$641,000 million in 1994, with rises in social security, Medicare and Medicaid sufficient to match the effects of inflation and constituting an 8.3 per cent overall increase.

Housing and Urban Development. The HUD budget for 1994 was set at \$25,400 million, an increase of \$200 million over the outlay for 1993.

Interior. The Interior Department's budget for 1994 rose from \$9,000 million to \$9,500 million.

Justice. The Justice Department's budget remained at around \$11,200 million. Clinton proposed spending \$50 million on community policing programmes.

Labour. Overall the budget of the department was to fall from \$47,900 million in 1993 to \$40,400 million in 1994, although there was an increase in the budget for employment and training programmes from \$5,800 million to \$7,500 million.

State. The international affairs budget was set at \$21,600 million, an increase of \$450 million over fiscal 1993.

Transportation. The department's \$40,240 million budget represented a 10.2 per cent increase over 1993, with 71 per cent of the budget allocated to infrastructure, most of which was to be used for the construction and repair of roads.

Treasury. The Treasury operating budget was virtually frozen at its 1993 level. Its total budget was set to rise from \$301,700 million in 1993 to \$318,900 million in fiscal 1994 because it included interest payments to be made on the steadily rising national debt.

Veterans' Affairs. The 1994 budget request was set at \$36,400 million, an increase of \$1,000 million over fiscal 1993.

Defeat for President over economic stimulus package

Clinton suffered the most serious legislative setback for his presidency so far when his short-term economic stimulus package was effectively destroyed in the Senate. Only a fraction of the \$16,300 million package was approved as the administration unsuccessfully struggled throughout April to overcome a determined and disciplined filibuster by the Republican minority in the Senate.

The stimulus package was separate from Clinton's longer-term programme to increase government investment, raise taxes and cut federal spending. It focused on short-term measures such as job-creation grants to states and cities, and increased spending on nutritional projects, student loans, immunization programmes and water and sewerage projects. Despite Republican objections that the measures were not urgent and that the cost of the package would simply increase the budget deficit, the stimulation package represented an attempt by

Clinton to use the reservoir of goodwill enjoyed by a newly inaugurated president and to utilize the Democratic majority in both houses of Congress in order to provide an immediate, if limited, boost for the US economy.

The package was approved by the House of Representatives in late March. However, as soon as the bill was considered by the Senate—which had far fewer procedural rules governing the limitation of debate or the number of amendments which could be offered—it rapidly became clear that the Republican minority was determined to attempt to use the issue as a means of inflicting an early political defeat on the new Democratic President. Although outnumbered in the upper house by 43 seats to 57, the Republican campaign was skilfully orchestrated by Minority Leader Bob Dole, and surprised many commentators by its level of aggression and its effectiveness.

The Democrats made several unsuccessful attempts to overcome the filibuster but were unable to muster the 60 votes required to secure a motion of closure. Clinton responded by accusing the Republicans of voting against the creation of jobs and in favour of "paralysis and gridlock". The Democrats in the legislature also threatened to keep the Senate in session over the Easter recess in order to force through the economic package. Despite such assertive posturing, however, on April 3 the leaders of the Senate began negotiating in an unsuccessful effort to resolve the impasse. Eventually, after a third failure to muster sufficient votes to end the filibuster, on April 5 the administration indicated that it was willing to make cuts in the package in order to secure sufficient Republican support.

By agreement between the two parties the recess was announced on the night of April 5, three days later than originally scheduled, thereby delaying any further consideration of the bill until April 20. During the recess both sides continued their campaigns, with the Democrats accusing their opponents of damaging the economy in the pursuit of short-term political ends, and the Republicans claiming that they were legitimately opposing the ill-considered plans of a "tax-and-spend" Democratic administration.

On April 16 Clinton offered "reluctantly" to cut some \$4,000 million from the package, an offer which was rejected by Dole. The scaled-down package was nevertheless submitted to another vote of closure, on April 21, when the Democrats again failed to muster enough votes. Unable even to arrive at a face-saving compromise, the administration was left with the choice of abandoning the package in its entirety, or else accepting terms dictated by the Republicans. In the event it chose the latter option which meant that the only element of the original package which received legislative approval was a \$4,000 million extension of unemployment benefit to those out of work for more than six months.

While accepting the defeat, both Clinton and Democratic leaders in Congress indicated that they would resubmit some elements of the

package to Congress at a later date as individual measures.

Corruption cases involving members of Congress

Senator David F. Durenberger, 58, a Republican from Minnesota and a senator since 1978, became on April 2 the ninth serving Senator in US history to be indicted, facing two federal felony charges involving the claiming of false travelling expenses from the Senate. The indictments related to the period between April and August 1987, and concerned a sum totalling \$3,825; Durenberger and two of his advisers had allegedly concealed his ownership of a Minnesota condominium in order that he could qualify for the reimbursement of expenses when he stayed there. Durenberger dismissed the accusations as "completely false" and rejected suggestions that he might be forced to resign.

Durenberger's Senate colleague, Bob Packwood, a Republican from Oregon, also came under increased pressure on April 2 as a group of his electors, the 200-strong Oregonians for Ethical Representation (OER), filed a second and final set of legal briefs before the Senate rules committee in a bid to have his November 1992 re-election victory invalidated. The OER action, claiming that Packwood had lied during his re-election campaign when responding to allegations of sexual misconduct, was separate from an inquiry being conducted by the Senate ethics committee into allegations by 23 women that Packwood had made unwanted sexual advances to them. Packwood, while admitting to having behaved improperly towards the women, had publicly apologized but had refused to discuss the allegations in detail.

Harold E. Ford, a Democratic member of the House of Representatives for Tennessee, was acquitted of bank fraud charges in a US federal court on April 9. The verdict concluded a legal struggle which had lasted for 10 years and which had seen the declaration of a mistrial in 1990 after the jury had been unable to reach a verdict.

Report on Tailhook scandal

The Defence Department on April 23 released a report compiled by its independent inspector-general concerning the Tailhook scandal. The report stated that no fewer than 117 senior officers had indulged in offensive and possibly criminal behaviour at the Tailhook convention of naval and marine aviators at the Las Vegas Hilton in September 1991 [see pp. 38999; 39087-88].

The report stated that 83 women and seven men had been assaulted during the three-day convention, which was reported to have degenerated into a drunken orgy in which some of those involved were unwilling participants. The report also found that

51 officers had lied during investigations into the affair.

In response to the report Clinton promised that disciplinary action would be taken against those implicated in the scandal, but urged the public not to interpret the report as "a general indictment of the United States Navy".

Mayoral primary election in Los Angeles

A non-partisan mayoral primary election was held in Los Angeles on April 20 among a field of 24 candidates. The winner, with 33 per cent of the vote, was Richard Riordan, a white, conservative, multi-millionaire businessman. In second place with 24 per cent of the vote was Michael Woo, a Chinese American who was known as one of the most liberal members of the Los Angeles city council. Riordan, the only registered Republican among the main candidates in the overwhelmingly Democratic city, would face Woo, a Democrat, in a run-off election on June 8, to determine who would succeed Tom Bradley, the city's black mayoral incumbent who had been in office for the previous 20 years.

Election of NAACP leader

The National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People (NAACP), the oldest civil rights organization in the USA, on April 9 chose Benjamin Chavis as its new executive director. A minister with a radical background, Chavis had served four years in prison in 1976 after being convicted of inciting a crowd to arson, but his conviction had later been overturned.

Chavis emerged as the successor to Benjamin Hooks only after a year-long struggle with the leading Democratic Party politician the Rev. Jesse Jackson. Although originally the favourite for the NAACP's leadership, Jackson was reported to have alienated the organization's board through a tactless lobbying campaign and, on April 7, he withdrew his candidacy.

Conviction of two police officers in Rodney King trial

One of the most controversial trials in US history ended on April 17 with the conviction by a federal jury of two of the four white officers from the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) who were involved in the arrest and beating of a black motorist, Rodney King, in March 1991.

The arrest of King, stopped by police after a drunken car chase in Los Angeles, had been videotaped by an amateur cameraman, recording a scene in which officers repeatedly beat and kicked him. The four LAPD officers were, however, acquitted in April 1992 on charges of assault, an unexpected and much-criticized verdict which sparked off one of the worst civil disturbances in the USA in the 20th century. Groups of predominantly black and Hispanic youths burned and looted the South Cen-

tral area of Los Angeles; by the time troops restored order in early May, more than 50 people had been killed and at least \$1,000 million worth of damage had been done [see p. 38894].

Following the riots the four officers were charged with the federal offence of having intentionally deprived King of his civil rights. Criticisms that the accused were being exposed to double jeopardy were circumvented through the claim that, whereas the 1992 state trial had focused upon the issue of whether the officers had used excessive force, the 1993 federal trial was to determine whether the officers had intended to use excessive force as a means of punishing King for having shown them a lack of respect.

The trial opened in late February with the selection of a jury of eight men and four women, which included two blacks and one Hispanic. Much of the evidence and the witnesses were identical to those which had been examined at the earlier trial, but there were two crucial differences. The federal prosecutors assigned to the case proved to be much more effective than had their California state counterparts, and, unlike in 1992, the prosecution put King on the witness stand to give personal testimony concerning the incident.

Despite his criminal associations, King appeared as a convincing and sympathetic witness and provided a powerful and disturbing description of the racial and physical abuse which he had suffered at the hands of the arresting officers. Only one of the four accused, Sgt. Stacy Koon, who had supervised King's arrest, chose to testify. Koon, who had not struck King, was accused of having violated King's 14th Amendment right to be kept free from harm while in official custody. The other three, accused of violating King's Fourth Amendment right to be free from the use of unreasonable force, were: Laurence M. Powell, who had delivered most of the blows; Theodore Briseno who during the 1992 trial had testified that the beating was unjustified; and Timothy Wind, a probationary officer who had struck King at least 12 times. Following the beating Koon, Powell and Briseno had been suspended from duty, while Wind had been dismissed from the LAPD.

As the jury began its deliberations on April 11 community leaders appealed for calm. Thousands of extra police officers were sent on to the streets and units of the National Guard were stationed in the city. On April 17 the jury convicted Koon and Powell while acquitting Briseno and Wind.

The verdicts were greeted with widespread relief and there were no reports of unrest in the city. Black leaders praised the judicial system for having produced a just verdict, a view endorsed by Clinton, who stated that the outcome of the case had confirmed "what a lot of people have felt for two years: that the civil rights of Rodney King were violated".

The two guilty officers were due to be sentenced on Aug. 4. They faced prison sentences of up to 10 years and fines of up to \$250,000.

Ending of Waco siege

The 51-day siege of the headquarters of the Branch Davidian religious cult near Waco,

Texas, ended on April 19 with the death of cult leader David Koresh and most of his followers as the besieged complex was consumed by fire. The cause of the fire remained a matter of dispute, although it began after an assault upon the compound by Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) units.

Initially the death toll was put at 86, including 17 children under 10 years of age. By the end of April, however, as the authorities examined the charred remains of the site, the final figure was revised to 72 dead, although medical examiners suggested that some of the bodies of children might have been burned so badly that they could not be recovered. Autopsies suggested that at least two of the dead had been killed by gunshot wounds.

The siege had begun on Feb. 28 after federal agents attempting to raid the compound had been bloodily repulsed by the heavily armed cult members [see p. 39358]. Concern for the safety of the women and children inside the compound, and fears that a further assault could provoke mass suicide among the cult members, led to a siege of the complex by local police and FBI units supported by federal armoured vehicles and tanks. Negotiations continued throughout March and early April, but although 34 people (including 21 children) left the compound Koresh refused to surrender. With the operation costing an estimated \$1,000,000 per week, and with no sign of an imminent negotiated end to the siege, the authorities decided to resolve the stalemate by launching a direct assault upon the compound.

The assault, which was approved by Clinton and by Attorney General Janet Reno, began at around 6 a.m. local time with armoured vehicles punching holes in the walls of the besieged buildings and pumping in tear gas. After further unsuccessful negotiations the pace of the operation was accelerated shortly before midday. The renewed assault was quickly followed by the lethal fire which was fanned by strong winds. Fire engines had not been stationed in the vicinity and did not arrive at the scene until more than 40 minutes after the fire had begun, by which time it had consumed the entire complex.

The FBI claimed that the fire had begun in three different locations and had been deliberately caused by cult members. Survivors from the siege alleged that the blaze had begun when kerosene lanterns—being used because the authorities had cut off electricity supplies to the compound—had been knocked over by one of the assault vehicles. The survivors also disputed FBI claims that those engaged in the final assault were fired on by cult members.

The extent of the death toll and the uncertainty surrounding the fire, together with earlier questions concerning the way in which the initial raid on the cult had been handled, led to demands for a congressional inquiry into the entire matter. There were also calls for the resignation of Reno—who denied that the affair had been mishandled and took full responsibility for the ending of the siege—and of FBI Director William Sessions, whose position had already been weakened by alleged ethics violations [see p. 39136].

In a statement on April 20 Clinton reaffirmed his confidence in Reno, accepted responsibility for the handling of the siege, but claimed that Koresh—whom he described as "dangerous, irrational and probably insane"—was ultimately responsible for the deaths. Nevertheless, Clinton ordered a joint Justice and Treasury Department investigation into the ending of the siege which would report directly to the President.

Prison siege in Ohio

Some 450 prisoners rioted on April 11 (Easter Sunday) at a maximum-security prison in Lucasville, Ohio, 130 km south of Columbus, the state capital, which housed some 1,800 inmates including some of the state's most dangerous criminals. The uprising and subsequent siege, in which nine people died, ended shortly before 10.30 p.m. local time on April 22, when the inmates surrendered. In exchange for the surrender state officials promised to review the complaints of the prisoners.

In the uprising eight guards were taken hostage; one was strangled, two were freed unharmed during the siege (in exchange for the authorities allowing the prisoners to state their grievances in live radio and television broadcasts), and the remaining five were freed when the inmates surrendered. The prisoners also murdered a number of fellow inmates under circumstances which remained unclear; eight prisoners in all were killed.

World Trade Center bombing developments

Federal prosecutors in Manhattan, New York City, released a fresh indictment on March 31 naming a fourth suspect, Ramzi Ahmed Yousef, in the February bombing of the World Trade Center [see pp. 39311; 39358-59].

Yousef was believed to have fled to Egypt in the aftermath of the bombing. Three men arrested in March, Mohammed Salameh, Nidal Ayyad and Mahmoud Abu Halima, were reindicted. All four were charged on a single count of causing the February bombing. The new indictment did not name two other men, Ibrahim Elgabrowny and Bilal Alkai, who had been formally linked to the bombing by federal officials and were being held in custody. However, on April 8 Alkai was also formally indicted for the bombing.

On April 1 district judge Kevin T. Duffy set a tentative trial date of Sept. 14, rejecting motions by defence attorneys to hold the trial within the 60 days set by federal law. Duffy also imposed a "gag" order on the lawyers and all agents involved in the case. The *Middle East International* of April 16 described the order as "unprecedented in its severity".

In an interview with the *New York Times* on April 5, President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt claimed that the bombing could have been prevented if US intelligence officials had heeded Egyptian warnings about dangers posed by Muslim fundamentalists in the USA. However, the US State Department issued a

statement which denied that Egypt had passed on any specific information on planned acts of terrorism.

■ Last article pp. 39357-59; reference article pp. R54-56.

CANADA

Prince Edward Island elections

Catherine Callbeck, who had replaced Joseph Ghiz as Prince Edward Island's Liberal leader and thereby became Premier in January 1993 [see p. 39263], became the first Canadian woman to win election as a provincial Premier when the Liberal Party won 31 of the 32 seats in the legislature (a net gain of one—for 1989 elections see p. 36651) in a March 29 poll. The Progressive Conservative Party (PCP) won the remaining seat.

UN ruling on Quebec language laws

The *Washington Post* of April 15 reported a ruling by the UN Commission on Human Rights in Geneva in favour of Gordon McIntyre, an undertaker who wished to display English wording on the sign outside his business in the village of Huntingdon, Quebec.

The non-binding ruling (not yet officially published pending its translation into all UN official languages) found that Quebec legislation dating from 1977 and allowing outdoor commercial signs only in French [see pp. 28782-84; 32314; 33525; 34940-41; 36426] ran counter to Article 19 of the UN's Universal Declaration of Human Rights which specified that "everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression".

■ Last article p. 39311; reference article pp. R33-34.

MEXICO

State elections

The ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) claimed a landslide victory in the extraordinary gubernatorial election held in the state of San Luis Potosí on April 18.

The PRI rejected opposition claims that it had resorted to fraud. According to the latest official results, the PRI's candidate Horacio Sánchez Unzueta received more than 65 per cent of the vote. Jorge Lozano, the conservative National Action Party (PAN) candidate, won 20 per cent. Third, with 12 per cent, was Concepción Nava Calvillo, Sánchez's mother-in-law and the widow of Salvador Nava Martínez, a notable advocate of honest elections [see also below] who died in May 1992; she was the candidate of the new Nava Political Party (NPP) and also represented the centrist Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD). The interim governor, Gonzalo Martínez Corbalá, who had resigned from the PRI in order to run as an independent, came a poor fourth. The PRI reportedly also won 13 seats in simultaneous elections to the local state congress.

The San Luis Potosí election was the first poll in Mexico to be supervised by non-partisan officials and was intended to restore political stability in the state in the aftermath of the forced resignation in October 1991 of the newly elected PRI governor Fausto Zapata, following widespread protests led by Nava, who was the unsuccessful opposition coalition candidate [see p. 38524].

Yucatán protest

The PAN on April 24 organized a referendum and protest march of more than 40,000 demonstrators in Mérida, capital of the state of Yucatán, in protest at the PRI decision to postpone until May 1995 the gubernatorial elections which had been set for November. The PRI, supported by satellite parties in the Yucatán congress, changed the state constitution on April 23 enabling the postponement, reportedly because it feared defeat in a state where the PAN commanded wide support. An appointed interim governor would take office from February to July 1995.

PRI dismissals

New PRI president Fernando Ortíz Arana, appointed in late March [see p. 39359], quickly stamped his authority on the party by dismissing six of the seven members of the executive committee for involvement in corrupt practices.

Chief among those dismissed was treasurer Miguel Alemán, son of a former head of state. Roberto Lajous, secretary for foreign relations, was the only one to retain his post.

■ Last article p. 39539; reference article pp. R45-46.

CUBA

Private US aid

A flotilla of 14 small boats arrived from Key West, Florida, on the US mainland, on April 25 bringing 10 tonnes of private humanitarian aid, including medicine, food and clothing. Organized by a group called "Basta" (Spanish for "enough"), the shipment was reported to be in response to the Cuban government's admission on April 6 that "several thousand" people were affected by an epidemic of optic neuritis, an illness which caused a progressive loss of sight and which was linked to vitamin B deficiency.

Cuban officials stated that the current US economic embargo made it difficult to obtain food and medicines [see pp. 38858; 39090; 39136]. Rationing had created serious nutritional problems since subsidies from the former Soviet Union had come to an end in 1990 [see p. 38229].

Call by dissidents for revised US policy

Prominent Cuban dissidents Elisardo Sánchez, Vladimiro Roca, Rolando Prats, Lázaro Loreto and Francisco Chaviano were signatories of a letter sent to US President Bill Clinton on April 16, calling on him to revise US policy towards Cuba in order to facilitate a negotiated solution to the "grave crisis"

gripping Cuban society. The letter described the 30-year US trade embargo as being rooted in the Cold War, "a conjuncture that had been superseded", and said that its maintenance was contrary to the spirit of international justice and "counterproductive", serving to harden the stance of the Cuban administration and the population towards the USA.

Drug trafficking accusations

The *Miami Herald* reported on April 8 that the US Attorney General's office was poised to indict 15 Cuban officials on charges of alleged direct involvement in the transshipment of cocaine from Colombia to the USA. Included in the newspaper's published list of names was Gen. Raúl Castro Ruz, brother of President Fidel Castro Ruz and the current First Vice-President, Minister of Defence and C-in-C of the Armed Forces.

Others named were Interior Minister Gen. Abelardo Colomé Ibarra, Manuel Pineiro, a former director of the American department of the ruling Communist Party (PCC), Gen. Nelson Blanco and Capt. Rosa María Abierno. Seven Cuban Interior Ministry officials on the list had been convicted in Cuba of drug trafficking in June 1989, three being subsequently executed and the others given long prison sentences [see pp. 36731; 37069].

The allegations resulted from grand jury testimony in Miami, Florida, from several witnesses including imprisoned Colombian drug dealer Carlos Lehder, a witness in the July 1992 trial of former Panamanian dictator Gen. Manuel Antonio Noriega [see p. 38857; 38999].

Death of senior PCC member

José Felipe Carneado, a veteran of the 1959 revolution and a member of the PCC's central committee with responsibility for religious affairs, died on March 29 aged 78.

■ Last article pp. 39359-60; reference article p. R37.

HAITI

Rejection of UN-OAS proposals

In late April the UN, the Organization of American States (OAS) and the US government were reported to be contemplating tougher action against Haiti's military coup leaders after their rejection of the latest UN-OAS plan to resolve the current crisis. The UN and OAS special envoy Dante Caputo, on his fifth diplomatic visit beginning on April 14, had put forward proposals a blanket amnesty for the army high command if they made way for the return of the exiled, President, Fr Jean-Bertrand Aristide, ousted in the September 1991 military coup [see pp. 38430; 38522-23].

The military-backed Prime Minister Marc Bazin stated on April 14, immediately after Caputo had put forward his proposals, that he was prepared to resign once Aristide had designated a Cabinet, provided that it was approved by the army, two main

parliamentary groups, the business sector and community and church leaders. On April 21, however, amid a hardening of position by the army leaders, Bazin claimed that he had neither seen Caputo's plan nor met him during his visit.

■ Last article p. 39360; reference article pp. R43-44.

JAMAICA

Re-formation of Patterson government

On April 6 Percival J. Patterson announced his new Cabinet following the landslide election victory of his People's National Party (PNP) on March 30 [see p. 39360 and below]. He pledged to continue the economic reforms on which the government had embarked four years earlier [see also p. R45].

All the ministers in the outgoing Cabinet were retained although generally in different posts. Of the new ministers Horace Clarke had had to resign in 1991 over the approval of an import tax waiver for Shell Oil (West Indies) Ltd [see pp. 38670-71].

Speaking on television on April 3, Patterson promised that the electoral system would be reformed to introduce national registration and computerized identification and voting systems. However, he rejected calls for an inquiry into alleged malpractice during the election. The opposition Jamaica Labour party (JLP) consequently boycotted the formal opening of Parliament on April 20.

Jamaican Cabinet

- *Percival J. Patterson Prime Minister; Defence
- *Seymour Mullings Deputy Prime Minister; Agriculture (also responsible for parliamentary affairs and electoral reform)
- *Hugh Small Finance
- *Portia Simpson (f) Labour and Welfare
- +Orville D. Ramtallie Construction
- Horace Clarke Water and Transport
- *Robert Pickersgill Public Utilities, Mining and Energy
- *Paul Robertson Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade
- *David Coore Legal Affairs
- Peter Phillips Minister without portfolio
- *Carlyle Dunkley Tourism, Commerce and Industry
- +K. D. Knight National Security and Justice
- *Easton Douglas Public Service and the Environment
- +Burchel Whiteman Education and Culture
- *Desmond Leakey Health
- *John Junor Local Government, Youth and Community Development
- Omar Davies Minister without portfolio
- *Member of outgoing Cabinet with altered portfolio.
- +Unchanged responsibility.
- Women are denoted by (f).

Final election results

Official final election results announced on April 22 gave the PNP 52 of the 60 seats in the House of Representatives, the remaining eight going to the JLP. Voter turnout, according to the *Caribbean Times* of April 6, was 60 per cent.

■ Last article p. 39360; reference article pp. R44-45.

GUATEMALA

Prison riot

At least seven inmates were reported killed and an undetermined number wounded and missing following a riot at the "Pavoncito" prison, 35 km from the capital, Guatemala City, on April 11-13. Some 1,200 prisoners had seized the prison following the death of a fellow inmate whose family later confirmed that he had been severely beaten by the police and then denied medical attention. Hundreds of Easter visitors had been taken as hostages, including the prison's director. Many relatives, however, had reportedly chosen to remain in order to shield the prisoners from excessive use of force.

In an eventual agreement (to be verified by the government's Human Rights Ombudsman) the authorities promised no reprisals, an end to police brutality, and improvement in food and general prison conditions.

Some local reports suggested that the underlying motive for the riot was that it should provide cover for the release (which in the event was not effected) by members of the Presidential Military Staff (EMP, despite its name a powerful element of the security network) of Noel de Jesús Beteta Alvarez, an EMP operative convicted of the murder in September 1990 of an internationally respected anthropologist Mima Mack [see p. 37707].

Human rights report

Americas Watch, the US-based human rights monitoring group, claimed in a report released in late March that it had information directly linking the army and the EMP to clandestine detentions or temporary disappearances.

The report cited three cases in detail, those of Carmen Valenzuela, a doctor, Maritza Urrutia, a university student, and an unnamed woman, all of whom were abducted and then released in 1992 and who later provided testimony. The obtaining of information about the Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unity (URNG) guerrillas appeared to be the dominant motive for the abductions.

The thrust of the report was that the EMP, created with US assistance in the 1960s, was a large-scale intelligence apparatus, employing more than 1,000 specialists, and which co-ordinated the intelligence of the army and security forces while being separate from both.

■ Last article pp. 39312-13; reference article p. R42.

EL SALVADOR

Freeing of murderers of Jesuits

Col. Guillermo Alfredo Benavides and Lt. Yushy Mendoza, sentenced in January 1992 to 30 years' imprisonment for the November 1989 murder of six Jesuits, their housekeeper and her daughter [see pp. 37037-38; 37181; 37957; 38414; 38716], were released on April 1 having served only 15 months of their sentences. They thus became the first beneficiaries of a controversial amnesty law passed by the right-wing dominated Legislative Assembly in March and widely seen as a device to protect members of the military accused of gross human rights violations during 12 years of civil war [see p. 39361]. The release was roundly condemned by opposition parties and the local Jesuit leadership.

The former Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN) guerrillas demanded on April 12 that two of their number, arrested for the murder in January 1991 of two US military advisers [see pp. 37956-57], should also be set free under the terms of the amnesty law.

■ Last article p. 39361; reference article pp. R39-40.

NICARAGUA

Release of US aid

The US government on April 2 released the remaining US\$50,000,000 of the \$104,000,000 in aid frozen in May 1992; \$54,000,000 had been released in December 1992 [see pp. 38957; 39232, where the total amount of aid withheld is wrongly given as \$100,000,000]; US aid for 1993 and 1994 had also, reportedly, been confirmed. The US administration cited Nicaragua's progress on human rights issues, and *Le Monde* of April 4 stated that according to an official US source, President Violeta Chamorro de Barrios had promised in return for the aid release that former left-wing Sandinista leader and current Army C.-in-C. Humberto Ortega Saavedra would "depart" by 1995. Ortega's dismissal was demanded by Chamorro's right-wing opponents [see p. 39361].

Release of killers

Domingo Acevedo, 70, and his son Juan Ramón Acevedo were freed from prison on April 20 after serving half of a 30-year sentence for the killing in January 1978 of Pedro Joaquín Chamorro Cardenal, husband of the current President, who had been editor of *La Prensa* and a leading opponent of the Somoza dictatorship [see p. 29020].

■ Last article pp. 39360-61; reference article p. R47.

BRAZIL

Rejection of monarchy in plebiscite

In a plebiscite held on April 21, popular disillusionment with the current presidential system failed to translate into voter enthusiasm for a parliamentary alternative or the return of the monarchy.

Despite mandatory voting, an estimated 40-45,000,000 of the 91,000,000 eligible to vote either abstained or submitted blank or spoilt returns. According to partial official figures released on April 22, the results showed 68.9 per cent in favour of a republican form of government and only 10 per cent favouring a monarchy; 58.7 per cent had opted for a presidential system and 23.9 per cent for a parliamentary structure, with 16 per cent rejecting both options. Final figures were to be released in early May.

The plebiscite was required by the 1988 Constitution [see pp. 36269-70] and was brought forward from September to avoid its being sidelined by the 1994 presidential election campaign. An overall revision of the Constitution was scheduled to begin in October.

Of more than 140 descendants of Dom Pedro II (the last King, ousted in 1889), Dom Pedro Alcantara de Orleans e Bragança, 80, had headed the shortlist of prospective monarchs.

Indictment of Collor

The Supreme Court on April 29 ruled that former President Fernando Collor de Mello should be indicted on charges of "passive corruption and criminal association" for his alleged role in massive fraud involving government funds and contracts while in office. Nine Justices agreed to accept part of the case presented by Attorney General Aristides Junqueira against Collor, who now faced a criminal trial before the Supreme Court [for background see pp. 39079; 39139; 39188; 39233; 39268].

New economic plan

An economic "action plan" presented by Economy and Finance Minister Eliseu Rezende on April 24, the sixth such plan in seven years, was aimed at achieving 3.5 per cent growth in 1993 while combating inflation currently running at 30 per cent a month. To the relief of financial and business sectors, no drastic measures such as freezing prices or bank accounts were involved. Left-wing economists claimed, however, that the plan served the interest of powerful groups such as building companies and was devoid of measures, such as agrarian reform, to tackle the underlying causes of the current crisis.

The plan concentrated on selling off government holdings in more than 1,000 private companies, and broadening the privatization programme of state enterprises, including mining, electrical distribution and communications. For the first time, foreign companies were to be allowed to buy up to 100 per cent participations in the companies up for sale. Resulting proceeds were to be used to reduce the

foreign debt and to fund social programmes geared to creating 1,800,000 jobs.

Other measures included (i) a 20 per cent increase in federal tax collections in 1993 tied to a campaign to combat tax evasion and fraud; (ii) a 10 per cent reduction in state companies' spending; (iii) incentives and subsidies for agriculture intended to stimulate the cultivation of basic food items and the reactivation of supply programmes of a social nature; (iv) spending of US\$2,600 million on basic housing and US\$590,000,000 on road repairs; (v) readjustment of public utility rates in the energy sector and the opening of this sector to allow for private-sector energy provision; and (vi) a Plan to Combat Hunger and Poverty, providing incentives to basic industries such as civilian construction and aid to small and medium-sized companies.

To reinforce the plan, President Itamar Franco announced simultaneously that financial speculation "based on the financial carousel of high interest rates" would no longer be permitted. To this end, interest rates on short-term investments were to be cut to below inflation to deter such speculation and stimulate growth. He also announced that draft legislation was being drawn up to guarantee the future independence of the Central Bank.

The measures were subject to approval by the Congress, which had delayed the implementation of a US\$234,000 million federal budget formulated in August 1992 and approved only on April 1.

Decision of Democratic Labour Party to leave government

Rio de Janeiro Governor Leonel Brizola, leader of the Democratic Labour Party (PDT), announced in early April the party's departure from the coalition government, following Franco's decision to proceed with the privatization of the National Steel Company (CSN) which Brizola had strenuously resisted.

Justice Minister and PDT member Mauricio Correa Lima, who had strongly supported Franco in the recent dispute with former Finance Minister Paulo Haddad [see p. 39363] and who had accordingly strengthened his position within the Cabinet, announced on April 6 that he had yet to reach a decision on whether or not to obey Brizola's request that he resign from the party.

Resignation of PMDB leader

The timing of the resignation on April 26 of Orestes Quércia, leader of the Party of the Brazilian Democratic Movement (PMDB), the country's largest party, took political analysts by surprise. Quércia had long been under pressure to step down in response to sustained allegations of widespread corruption during his recent term as Governor of the State of São Paulo.

New armed forces chief

Adml. Arnaldo Leite Pereira on April 16 became Chief of the Armed Forces General Staff, replacing Gen. Antonio de Rocha Veneu who was to retire from the army [for his appointment see p. 39139].

■ Last article p. 39363; reference article pp. R32-33.

SURINAM

Coup threats

The Netherlands government, as the former colonial power, on April 3 endorsed the decision of President Ronald R. Venetiaan to insist on his nomination of Col. Arthy Gorré, a former adviser to Defence Minister Siegfried Gilds, as the new C.-in-C. of the armed forces, stating that the furtherance of democracy depended on the subordination of the army to civilian power. A group of army officers was opposed to the appointment and a coup was threatened by Lt.-Col. Désiré "Desi" Bouterse, who had resigned from the post in November 1992 [see p. 39185] but effectively remained in command of the military.

■ Last article p. 39185; reference article pp. R51-52.

COLOMBIA

Doubling of sentences for terrorism

The government announced on the evening of April 15 the doubling to 60 years of prison sentences for anyone committing acts of terrorism which caused injury or death. The act of placing and carrying bombs and explosive devices would carry 40 years. Remission from such sentences would only be granted to those who collaborated with the authorities.

A car bomb had exploded in the capital, Bogotá, earlier in the day, killing 11 people and injuring 218. The government blamed the attack on Pablo Escobar Gaviria, fugitive leader of the Medellín drug cartel.

The anti-Escobar vigilante group known as Pepes, or People Persecuted by Pablo Escobar [see p. 39313], released a communiqué in Medellín on April 24 claiming that, due to government actions against Escobar, it was to disband its own "terrorist" group. The government was reported to have offered 1,000 million pesos (about US\$1,200,000) reward for information leading to the identification and arrest of Pepes members.

Serious floods

There were widespread serious flooding and several landslide incidents in late April, as a result of prolonged and continuing torrential rain after a year of drought. More than 100 people were feared to have died when the river Taparó, in the north-western department of Antioquia, burst its banks on April 26. The river Ariari was also reported to be flooding in Meta department in the eastern plains. In the south-east, the river Amazon and two of its major tributaries were at their highest for 40 years, causing 5,000 Ticuna and Yagua Indians and white settlers to lose their homes, livestock and crops due to the rising waters. Dozens of bridges had been washed away and 24 main roads blocked. An estimated 400,000 slum dwellers around Bogotá were in danger of being flooded out.

The situation was seriously exacerbated by weak government ecological policies and lack of environmental protection measures, which had led to uncontrolled deforestation in many areas. Lack of natural vegetation to retain moisture caused the run-off of water and loss of topsoils, leaving eroded landscapes and causing landslides and the silting of rivers.

■ Last article pp. 39313-14; reference article pp. R35-36.

ECUADOR

Devastating floods

A state of emergency was declared by the government in early April in response to one of Ecuador's worst natural disasters. Thousands were left homeless and unknown numbers were feared dead when heavy rainfall in the southern province of Azuay on March 29 triggered a landslide of an estimated 65,000,000 cubic metres of rock. This formed a dam in the Paute river valley, and rising water levels threatened several communities and Cuenca, the country's third largest city, which was already cut off from the north.

Asylum for Venezuelan coup plotters

The government announced on April 8 that for humanitarian reasons it would grant asylum to two Venezuelan army non-commissioned officers, named as César Ricardo Bastardo and Leonardo Bastida, who had participated in the November 1992 failed military coup in Venezuela [see pp. 39185-86]. Similar protection had been granted on March 3 to Col. Alfredo Castro and Capt. Jesús Navas.

■ Last articles pp. 39267; 39316; reference article p. R39.

PERU

Military show of force

Tanks rolled through the streets of the capital, Lima on April 21 and 22 in a show of support for Gen. Nicolas de Bari Hermoza Rios, the army commander and chairman of the Armed Forces Joint Command.

The show of force followed accusations by left-wing members of the Congress that the army had executed nine students and a professor in 1992 during an incursion onto the campus of La Cantuta University, 30 km east of the Lima. On April 23 the commanders general of the navy and the air force and the acting director-general of the national police issued a communiqué in support of Hermoza; the military leadership rejected the accusations, arguing that the investigation of the 10 disappearances had not yet been completed.

Coup anniversary

Hermoza Rios had confirmed his allegiance to President Alberto Fujimori on April 4, two days before the first anniversary of the presidential armed-backed coup which had suspended the Constitution and closed down the Congress and judiciary [see p. 38846]. In

a television broadcast the same day, Fujimori justified his action, claiming that the country was now stable for investment and no longer the continent's "most dangerous country, devastated by terrorism".

Meanwhile, the Maoist Shining Path (*Sendero Luminoso*) guerrillas marked the anniversary by bombing a middle-class Lima shopping centre, killing a security guard, and by ambushing security forces in Quesquenda, 500 km north of Lima, killing seven policemen and three soldiers.

Sendero commanders at large also pledged themselves to protecting the life of their leader Abimael Guzmán Renoso, serving life imprisonment after his capture in September 1992. On April 3 Guzmán was transferred from detention on the off-shore island of San Lorenzo to a new naval maximum security prison in Callao, the satellite port of Lima.

A *Sendero* attack on a prison in northern Peru on April 26 reportedly freed four guerrilla inmates.

Sentencing of guerrilla leaders

Víctor Polay Campos, leader of the left-wing Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement (MRTA), captured in June 1992 [see p. 38959], was sentenced, along with Peter Cardenas, another leading MRTA commander, to life imprisonment for treason on April 3. The same sentence was passed on April 6 in absentia on Lucero Pampa, the MRTA's number two and reportedly in exile in France.

Another leading MRTA member, Benjamin Renfigo, was captured on April 7.

Military sentences over November 1992 coup attempt

The Appeals Court of the Supreme Council of Military Justice on April 3 issued the final verdict on officers implicated in the November 1992 coup attempt [see pp. 39187; 39314].

The court martial sentences were changed for six officers, including Gen. Jaime Salinas Sedo, whose eight-year prison sentence was upheld but whose civil fine was reduced from 500,000 soles to 250,000 soles, and Gen. Manuel Obando Solas, whose sentence was increased from seven to eight years and his fine from 50,000 to 60,000 soles. The release of eight officers and the sentences of 19 others were upheld.

■ Last article p. 39362; reference article pp. R49-50.

BOLIVIA

Sentencing of former dictator

The Supreme Court on April 21 passed sentence in absentia on Gen. Luis García Meza after a protracted seven-year trial, condemning him to 30 years' imprisonment on charges of murder, looting the national treasury, corruption and abuse of constitutional power as head of a repressive military regime in 1980-81.

This was the first time in Bolivia's history that a former dictator had been so sentenced. Those present in court to hear the verdict included Lidia Gueiler, the former President deposed by García

Meza, and relatives of those murdered by the García Meza regime. The whereabouts of García Meza were unknown, but it was widely suspected that he was receiving police and military protection.

Similar or lesser sentences were meted out to 14 of 58 of Meza's closest collaborators, including 30 years for former Interior Minister Col. Luis Arce Gómez, who had been extradited to the USA in December 1989 [see pp. 37958; 38095; 37487-88] and was serving a 30-year prison sentence for drug trafficking.

Trade agreement with Chile

An important 10-year tariff-cutting trade agreement was signed with Chile on April 7, inducing expectations that diplomatic relations, severed by Bolivia in March 1978 over the issue of Bolivian access to the Pacific [see p. 29036], might be restored. A feasibility study for a pipeline to export Bolivian natural gas to northern Chile was also agreed.

Intended to reduce the trade deficit with Chile (estimated at US\$117,000,000 in 1992) the accord stipulated a joint list of 100 products which would be tariff-free, including those previously subject to partial tariff exemptions under the Latin American Integration Association (ALADI). The number of free-trade products would be revised every three years. Some Bolivian industrial products, including spun cotton, tin alloys, and soya-bean oil and cake, would also have free access.

■ Last article p. 39362; reference article pp. R31-32.

ARGENTINA

Major debt agreement

A debt reduction plan, based on the mechanism devised in 1989 by former US Treasury Secretary Nicholas Brady, was signed with creditor banks in New York on April 7. This effectively ended the 11-year foreign debt crisis, and the government calculated that the burden of servicing US\$19,290 million in debt principal would be reduced by a third.

Under the formula the banks were to concede a debt reduction in exchange for bonds secured by US Treasury zero coupon bonds. On April 7 Argentina gave the banks US\$16,970 million of these so-called "Brady bonds" in return for the transfer of foreign debt certificates covering principal and a further US\$8,300 million in interest arrears. The arrears were covered by separate 12-year floating rate bonds not backed by collateral.

The 30-year "Brady bonds" in turn came in two varieties, enabling banks to choose between preserving principal or interest. Par bonds represented the full value of debt principal but paid low, fixed interest of 4 per cent a year, to rise gradually to a maximum 6 per cent by seven years. Discount bonds represented only 65 per cent of principal but paid floating interest of $1\frac{1}{16}$ per cent of Libor (London inter-bank offered rate).

Defeat over proposed pensions system reform

The record of the executive branch in securing legislative backing for its policies suffered a reverse in mid-April when the congressional

opposition forced the government of President Carlos Saúl Menem to negotiate a compromise formula on a bill radically reforming the country's state pensions system. The government retreated and promised to make contributions to private pension schemes voluntary.

First introduced in August 1992, the pension bill sought to replace the collapsing state system with a semi-private scheme. This provoked a storm of protest across the country, including that from disaffected deputies among the ruling Peronists.

Economy Minister Domingo Cavallo had insisted that the reform was a crucial part of the government's economic strategy designed to unburden the state and to promote a private pension system geared to stimulating capital markets, boosting domestic savings, reducing the import of capital and providing long-term finance for industry.

Alleged corruption

Menem stressed on April 11 that the April 8 detention in Rome of Claudio Moreno, ambassador to Italy, would not affect "the good relations" between both countries.

Moreno's arrest related to alleged illegal activities over the implementation of co-operation and investment agreements signed with Italy and Spain in December 1987 and February 1988 by Argentina's former Radical Party (UCR) government.

Menem's brother-in-law Karim Yoma was currently under investigation for colluding with other senior government officials, in Argentina and Italy, to extract "commissions" from companies applying for loans to import Italian machinery or to finance investments in Argentina. He had been dismissed in 1990 from his post as a Foreign Ministry official in charge of Italian and Spanish relations. Karim Yoma's brother Emir, an economic adviser, had been dismissed as presidential adviser in January 1991 and accused of bribery and corruption [see p. 37959], while Amira Yoma, Menem's former appointments secretary, had been dismissed in July 1991 on drug money laundering charges [see p. 38335].

Death of Rojas

Adml. (ret'd) Isaac Rojas, 87, who played a leading role in the September 1955 overthrow of President Juan Domingo Perón, and who was Vice-President from 1955 to 1958, died on April 12.

■ Last article pp. 39363-64; reference article pp. R28-29.

LATIN AMERICA

Group of Rio meeting

The Group of Rio countries (Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Mexico, Paraguay, Uruguay and Venezuela) met on April 5 in Santa Cruz, Bolivia.

The meeting voted to readmit two suspended members: Peru (suspended following the April 1992 army-backed presidential coup—see p. 38846) and Panama (suspended in 1988 when the country was under the dictatorship of Gen. Manuel Antonio Noriega). However, on April 6 Panama opted not

to accept the invitation because the proposed rein-statement did not include the full voting rights it had enjoyed in 1988, while on April 7 Peru announced that it would evaluate the offer (made only after Venezuela had lifted its veto) before giving a definite reply.

■ Last article pp. 39139-40; reference article pp. R58-59.

IN BRIEF

COSTA RICA: Four members of the self-styled Death Commando Group were captured and arrested by security forces on April 29 as they were about to board an aircraft out of the country, having released 23 people (18 of them Supreme Court

judges) whom they had held to ransom for three days; Colombian and US counterterrorism experts had advised the Costa Rican government, which had refused the request of relatives of some of the hostages to pay the ransom of US\$8,000,000 demanded on behalf of one of the gunmen, a former police officer, for emergency medical treatment in the USA.

VENEZUELA: Claudio Fermín, 43, a former mayor of the capital, Caracas, was chosen in a primary election on April 18 as presidential candidate of the ruling Democratic Action (AD) party; Oswaldo Alvarez Paz, 50, governor since December 1992 of the western oil state of Zulia, was chosen in an April 25 primary as candidate of the chief opposition Social Christian Party (COPEI).

ASIA - PACIFIC

PAKISTAN

Dismissal of Sharif government

Using controversial presidential powers under the Eighth Amendment to the Constitution, President Ghulam Ishaq Khan on April 18 dismissed the government of Prime Minister Mian Mohammad Nawaz Sharif, accusing it of "maladministration, corruption, and nepotism". Balkh Sher Mazari, a dissident member of the Pakistan Muslim League (PML), the dominant party in the outgoing coalition, was immediately sworn in as acting Prime Minister of an interim government. Khan also ordered the dissolution of the National Assembly and promised that fresh elections would be held on July 14.

Khan claimed in a nationally televised address that the Sharif government had grossly misused state funds and "unleashed a reign of terror" against its political opponents, and that it had been implicated in the circumstances surrounding the death in January of the Army Chief of Staff, Gen. Asif Nawaz Janjua [see p. 39271]; the Sharif government had on April 12 appointed a judicial commission to inquire into allegations by Nawaz's widow that he had been poisoned.

Sharif, claiming that his dismissal was illegal, vowed to prove his case in court, and threatened on April 19 to take the issue onto the streets and to fight his dismissal "in every nook and cranny of the country". On April 20 his supporters in Punjab, his home province, organized a 24-hour general strike.

The Eighth Amendment, introduced in 1985 by the then President, Gen. Mohammad Zia ul Haq, had been used by him in 1988 to dismiss the government of M. K. Junejo [see p. 36218], and was used again in 1990, this time by Khan, to dismiss the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) government of Benazir Bhutto [see p. 37652]. Sharif had announced in February the appointment of a National Assembly committee to consider a repeal of the Eighth Amendment.

The growing tension between the President and the Prime Minister had surfaced initially in January 1993 when Khan, in defiance of Sharif, appointed Gen. Abdul Waheed Kakar, a relatively junior officer, to succeed Nawaz [see p. 39271]. Observers had regarded the appointment as a sign of Khan's determination to regain control over military appointments, after having been forced in mid-1991 to accept Sharif's choice of the reportedly pro-Western Janjua [see p. 38289]. Within the Cabinet, splits widened over Sharif's nomination as president of the PML in March 1993 [see p. 39370]. The emergence of identifiable pro-Sharif and pro-Khan factions at this time was attributed by observers to covert moves by Khan to undermine the government. On April 4 Sharif sought to end the hardening antagonism by formally nominating Khan as the PML's candidate for the presidential elections due in November. However, further resignations by pro-Khan ministers in mid-April indicated that the two sides remained in bitter conflict, and in a televised speech on April 17 Sharif went on the offensive, calling the presidency a "den of conspirators".

Appointment of caretaker government

The new interim government consisted of more than 30 federal ministers, ministers of state and special advisers, drawn from dissident PML factions and the PPP.

Moving immediately to restore public confidence, acting Prime Minister Mazari said on April 19 that he was committed to holding free and fair elections, and to healing the wounds inflicted by the "misdeeds" of the past regime; he also undertook to end "political confrontation". While underlining his determination to uncover corruption, Mazari stressed that "I am not going to launch any witch-hunts". On April 20 Finance Minister Leghari assured the business community that Sharif's privatization programme would not be reversed.

By the end of April, however, differences had emerged within the new coalition. Bhutto, who had justified her party's inclusion in the caretaker government by saying that it represented a move towards fresh elections, threatened to withdraw support unless all four

Key members of new Pakistan Cabinet

Balkh Sher Mazari Acting Prime Minister
 Syed Sharifuddin Pirzada Foreign Affairs
 Farooq Ahmad Khan Leghari Finance and Economic Affairs
 Mir Hazar Khan Bijarani Defence
 Aftab Ahmed Khan Sherpao Defence Production
 Ihsan-ul-Haq Piracha Commerce
 Jehangir Badr Food and Agriculture
 Zafar Ali Leghari Industries
 Malik Muhammad Qasim Railways
 *Asef Ahmad Ali Narcotics
 Amanullah Khan Jadoon Kashmir and Northern Affairs
 Zulfiqar Ali Shah Jamote Population Welfare
 Kausar Niazi Information and Broadcasting
 Arbab Muhammad Jehangir Khan Petroleum and Natural Resources
 Ghulam Murtaza Jatoi Manpower and Overseas Pakistanis Affairs
 Ahmad Nawaz Bugti Special Education and Social Welfare
 Wazir Ahmad Khan Jozegai Women's Affairs
 Arbab Ghulam Rahim Political Affairs
 Khurshid Mahmood Kasuri Parliamentary Affairs
 Zahid Sarfraz Labour
 Manzoor Ahmed Gichki Management Services
 Asif Ali Zardari Water and Power
 Anwar Saifullah Khan Environment and Urban Affairs
 Hamid Nasir Chatta Communication and Planning and Development
 Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani Local Government and Rural Development
 *Member of outgoing government.

provincial assemblies were also dissolved. President Khan's reluctance to accede to this demand was reportedly based on his assumption that he would be supported in his bid re-election as President on three of the four existing provincial governments (Sharif's chief ally in the Punjab, Chief Minister Ghulam Haider Wyne, having been ousted on April 25 after losing a vote of confidence).

World Bank loan

The World Bank was reported on April 21 to have agreed to lend Pakistan US\$100,000,000 to restore infrastructure damaged in floods in September 1992 [see p. 39098].

Visit by Kozyrev

The Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev visited Pakistan on April 6-8 for talks with Sharif and senior members of his government, principally on Afghanistan, Kashmir and Tajikistan.

■ Last article pp. 39360-70; reference article pp. R78-79.

AFGHANISTAN

Differences over Cabinet appointments - Renewed fighting - Najibullah plea

The peace accord concluded in early March [see p. 39369] came under intense pressure after reports of a continuing power struggle between Prime Minister-designate Gulbuddin Hekmatyar and President Burhanuddin Rabbani centring on the formation of a new Cabinet. In mid-April Hekmatyar accused Rabbani of violating the peace agreement by refusing to dissolve the current Cabinet, and threatened war if Rabbani withheld approval of Hekmatyar's list of ministers.

A presidential spokesman claimed on April 3 that Hekmatyar's proposed Cabinet list, submitted to Rabbani the previous day, had been drawn up without proper consultation with all the factions party to the March agreement, and on April 11 Rabbani said that most factions were opposed to Hekmatyar's list. Simultaneous reports indicated that differences between Hekmatyar and Rabbani hinged on whether Hekmatyar would agree to Ahmed Shah Masud being retained as Defence Minister.

On April 15 Hekmatyar revealed details of his proposed Cabinet showing the ministries of Defence, Foreign Affairs, and the Interior re-organized as a council under the collective supervision of Masud, former President Seghbatullah Mujjadedi, leader of the *Jebha-i-Nejat-i-Melli* faction, and Kazi Mohammad Amin Waqqad.

Renewed fighting

More than 200 people were reported to have been killed on April 19 during heavy fighting in the southern province of Kandahar involving supporters of Rabbani and guerrilla groups claiming the governorship of the province.

A peace agreement between the government and the pro-Shia *Hezb-e-Wahdat-e-Islami*, concluded on April 1, broke down after fierce fighting between the two sides in western Kabul resulted in scores of casualties on April 12 and 13.

Plea by Najibullah

UN officials said on April 13 that former President Mohammed Najibullah, who had sought refuge inside UN offices in Kabul following his overthrow in April 1992 [see pp. 38847-48], had asked to leave the country. Najibullah was said also to have undertaken to leave politics. In March Rabbani had given an assurance that Najibullah's future would be decided as soon as a new Cabinet had been appointed.

Abduction of diplomats

Three Pakistan-based European diplomats were abducted on April 22, allegedly by Afghan tribesmen involved in the production and trafficking of heroin, while on an official mission in the southern Pakistani province of Baluchistan.

Pakistani officials said that the diplomats had crossed the border "as guests of one Afghan and then been abducted by another Afghan". On April 26 Pakistan was reported to have offered to free two Afghan tribesmen, arrested in March on drug and gun-running charges, in exchange for the release of the diplomats.

■ Last article p. 39369; reference article p. R60.

KAZAKHSTAN

Joint oil venture with US company

A joint accord to develop and exploit the Tengiz and Korolev oilfields in western Kazakhstan was signed in Alma Ata by President Nursultan Nazarbayev and Kenneth Derr, chief executive of the US-based Chevron Corporation, on April 6. The 40-year deal, expected to be worth US\$20,000 million, was the biggest of its kind between a major multinational and a member of the Commonwealth of Independent states (CIS).

The allocation by Israel of "a huge specific purpose credit guarantee" to Kazakhstan—the first such guarantee by Israel to any state—was confirmed on March 31.

Creation of naval force

A presidential decree on the creation of naval forces, reportedly for the defence of the Caspian Sea coast, was issued on April 2. The measure came in response to Turkmenistan's proposal in 1992 for a common defence of the Caspian Sea.

Visit by Vranitzky

An air communication agreement and a memorandum on metallurgical investments were signed with Austria during the visit on April 25-27 of Austrian Chancellor Franz Vranitzky.

■ Last article p. 39368; reference article p. R72.

KIRGIZSTAN

New political alliance

Several centrist parties announced in Bishkek on April 3 that they had agreed to form a bloc "for the sake of political stability". A statement issued on behalf of the new organization demanded a strong government and state regulation of a market economy.

Akayev's visit to Japan

The offer of a Japanese low-interest loan to Kirgizstan worth US\$60,000,000—the first such assistance by Japan to a member of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS)—was announced during a visit to Japan by President Askar Akayev on April 20-24. The loan, to be repaid over 40 years with a 10-year grace period, was part of a structural adjustment facility from the International

Development Association (IDA—an affiliate of the World Bank advancing capital to the poorer developing countries) with co-financing by Japan.

Military agreement with Russia

An agreement with Russia on bilateral military co-operation and the utilization of military facilities was initialled in Moscow on April 8. The deal was expected to be formalized at a CIS summit in the Armenian capital, Yerevan, on April 30.

■ Last article p. 39369; reference article pp. R72-73.

TAJIKISTAN

Death of former President

Former President Rakhman Nabiyev, 62, died on April 11 after apparently suffering a heart attack. Nabiyev's body was found by bodyguards in his flat in Dushanbe.

Nabiyev had been Chairman of the Council of Ministers until 1982, when he became first secretary of the Tajik Communist Party, a post from which he was dismissed in 1985 shortly after Mikhail Gorbachev became general secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. He returned to power after winning presidential elections in Tajikistan in November 1991 [see p. 38582], but was forced to resign in September 1992 after losing military and political control to an opposition coalition of Islamic and Democratic groups [see pp. 39097].

Release of Russian frontier guards

Ten Russian border guards abducted and taken to Afghanistan on April 5 were released on April 8 after the Tajik Ministry of Defence issued an ultimatum to Afghanistan threatening to take "all necessary action". Unconfirmed reports said that the guards had been kidnapped by members of the Rastokhez People's Front (Rebirth Party) based in Afghanistan.

Some 90,000 Tajik refugees still remained in Afghanistan according to a member of the parliamentary commission on refugee affairs on April 3.

Deployment of additional CIS forces

The Russian Supreme Soviet on April 27 voted to provide a 500-strong military peacekeeping contingent in accordance with an agreement concluded at a summit of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) in January [see pp. 39282-83; 39272; 39320]. The first battalion of peacekeeping forces from Kirgizstan had arrived in March [see p. 39369] to join a small number of troops sent earlier by Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan.

Dismissal of mayor of Dushanbe

The mayor of Dushanbe, Maksud Ikramov, was dismissed for the second time on April 3 after being charged with corruption. Ikramov had been reinstated in late 1992, having been arrested and imprisoned in March 1992 for

misusing his authority and bribe-taking [see pp. 38811; 38916; 39147].

■ Last article p. 39369; reference article pp. R83-84.

INDIA

Court ruling on dismissal of state government - Investigation into Bombay explosions

The Supreme Court on April 16 suspended the reinstatement of the (Bharatiya Janata Party—BJP) Madhya Pradesh government. It thereby quashed a ruling by the Madhya Pradesh High Court that the dismissal of the state government in December 1992 had been "invalid" and "beyond the scope of the constitution".

The dismissal of the government had followed its failure to implement a ban on Hindu religious groups after the demolition of the mosque at Ayodhya in neighbouring Uttar Pradesh [see p. 39222].

Investigation into Bombay explosions

Investigations continued into the bomb explosions which devastated Bombay in March [see pp. 39370-71], amid reports of official confusion over Pakistan's role in the affair.

On April 17 the External Affairs Minister Dinesh Singh was quoted as saying that the investigation "had so far not provided any concrete proof of direct involvement by Pakistan", adding that speculation of war between the two countries over the issue was unfounded. On April 18, however, the Minister of State for Internal Security, Rajesh Pilot, said that investigations into the bombings "clearly indicate Pakistan's involvement".

Pilot's allegations were backed by the Home Affairs Minister S. B. Chavan who, in a statement to the Lok Sabha on April 21, implicated Pakistan in the "planning and execution" of the explosions. On April 22 Pakistan rejected Chavan's allegations as "mischievous", saying that they contradicted statements issued by other members of the government.

During bilateral meetings coinciding with the annual summit of the South Asian Association for Regional Co-operation (SAARC) on April 10-11 [see p. 39421], Pakistan's then Prime Minister, Mian Mohammad Nawaz Sharif, had promised Indian Prime Minister P. V. Narasimha Rao that he would help track members of the Memon family, implicated in the affair [see p. 39370], who were reported to have fled to Pakistan.

By mid-April police in Bombay had made more than 60 arrests in connection with the bombings, and uncovered a total of over 4,500 kg of explosives in different parts of the city.

Union Carbide trial over Bhopal disaster

A court in Bhopal on April 8 ordered local officials of the US-based Union Carbide company, implicated in the Bhopal gas disaster of December 1984 [see pp. 33647-48], to stand trial on charges of culpable homicide. Crimi-

nal proceedings against the company began in July 1992 after the Supreme Court lifted immunity from prosecution in October 1991 [see p. 38532; 39008; 39194].

Airliner hijacking

The hijacker of an Indian Airlines Boeing 737, allegedly a Kashmiri militant, was killed on April 25 after being captured by Indian commandos who freed all 141 passengers at Amritsar airport.

New army chief

Lt.-Gen. B. C. Joshi was named as new Army Chief of Staff on April 9, succeeding Gen. S. F. Rodrigues who was due to retire in June.

Rao's visit to Thailand

Prime Minister Rao held bilateral talks with Thai leaders during a visit on April 7-9. Reports indicated that the visit had been prompted by concern to raise India's profile among members of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) which had granted India the status of a "dialogue partner" in January 1992 [see p. 38729].

Economy

Further liberalization

The government on April 14 introduced measures to encourage investment by private companies, including foreign groups, by removing the motor, white goods (refrigerators and washing machines) and leather industries from the list of enterprises requiring a licence.

Foreign investment proposals worth Rs 42,900 million were approved by the government between August 1991 and December 1992 (US\$1.00=Rs 30.9945 as at April 30, 1993). This exceeded by more than eight times the level of investment (Rs 5,300 million) in August 1990-December 1991, according to the annual report of the Ministry of Industry published on April 22. The USA continued to be the leading foreign investor, followed by Switzerland and Japan.

Talks with IMF

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) on April 9 agreed to release the final tranche of SDR231 million (about US\$300 million) under a standby arrangement of SDR1,656 million (about US\$2,200 million) negotiated in October 1991 [see p. 38439], after talks with senior Indian officials in New Delhi which ended on April 9.

States developments

The ruling Congress (I) lost control of the Manipur state assembly following elections on April 6 in which left-wing parties won a landslide victory. Dasarath Deb was sworn in as Chief Minister of a 14-member left-wing coalition government on April 11.

Violence erupted in Srinagar, Kashmir, after police on April 1 fired at mourners attending the funeral of Abdul Ahad Guru, a prominent Muslim heart surgeon and leading member of the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF), who was killed

after being abducted by armed gunmen on March 31. A fresh upsurge of violence in the state in mid-April led to the deaths of more than 70 people. On April 28 the army was called in to end a strike by thousands of predominantly Muslim police.

The Chief Minister of Maharashtra, Sharad Pawar, appealed on April 16 against a recent court ruling which found him guilty of "corrupt electoral practices" [see p. 39371].

■ Last article pp. 39370-71; reference article pp. R67-69.

SRI LANKA

Assassination of Athulathmudali

The leader of the opposition Democratic United National Front (DUNF), Lalith Athulathmudali, was shot dead by an unknown assailant outside Colombo on April 23. Athulathmudali had been addressing a public rally to canvass support for the DUNF, which was expected to emerge as a strong challenger to the ruling United National Party (UNP) in regional elections scheduled for May 17.

Confusion surrounded the identity of Athulathmudali's assassin. On April 24 DUNF's deputy leader, Gamini Dissanayake, claimed that Athulathmudali had been "a victim of [government] killer squads", and denied reports that the body of Athulathmudali's killer had been found close to the scene of the assassination bearing papers showing membership of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). A spokesman for the LTTE also denied its involvement in the murder. On April 27, however, President Ranasinghe Premadasa strongly rejected Dissanayake's allegations.

Athulathmudali, 56, came from an upper-class Sinhalese family, and had been educated at Oxford and Harvard universities. He trained as a lawyer and entered politics as a member of the UNP, rising to prominence as Minister for National Security in 1984-88 when he was identified with ruthless measures against separatist Tamil guerrillas. After losing a bid for the presidency, Athulathmudali was retained in government by Premadasa, although with less influence, as Minister for Agriculture and Development (1988-90) and Minister for Education (1990-91). Resigning in August 1991 to back an ultimately unsuccessful movement to impeach Premadasa on charges of corruption [see pp. 38393; 38440], Athulathmudali defected from the UNP in September 1991, and in January 1992 he formally launched the DUNF.

On April 28 one person was killed and scores injured during clashes between police and mourners attending Athulathmudali's funeral in Colombo.

■ Last article pp. 39270; 39327; reference article pp. R81-82.

BURMA

Adjournment of national convention

On April 8 the national convention to co-ordinate the drafting of a new constitution was adjourned until June 7. The convention, which had opened on Jan. 9, had on Jan. 11 been adjourned until Feb. 1 [see p. 39275].

According to the *Economist* in a report on the convention on April 17, many of the delegates had refused to accept the central feature of the constitution proposed by the ruling junta, the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC), namely that the armed forces should have a "leadership role" in national politics; all the delegates to the convention had been "treated like wayward children" and as many as 100 of the original 699 delegates had absconded.

Border agreement with India

Burma and India signed agreements in late March aimed at enhancing collaboration on the suppression of separatist movements and drug trafficking along common borders.

The agreements were signed during an unexpected visit to Burma on March 28-31 by J. N. Dixit, the Indian foreign secretary. Dixit's visit was the first by a high-ranking Indian official since the SLORC assumed power in 1988. According to the *Far Eastern Economic Review* of April 15 the visit was possibly aimed at raising India's profile in Burma at a time of rising Chinese influence within the SLORC's higher echelons.

■ Last article pp. 39323-24; reference article pp. R62-63.

THAILAND

Relations with China and Indonesia

Visit by Chinese Foreign Minister

Qian Qichen, the Chinese Foreign Affairs Minister, visited Thailand on April 18-21 for talks with his Thai counterpart, Squadron Ldr. Prasong Sonsiri. The two sides reviewed bilateral relations and discussed the situation in Cambodia. They also discussed a recent regional initiative to develop the upper Mekong River basin, involving Thailand, China, Burma and Laos [see also p. 39324].

Prime Minister's visit to Indonesia

Prime Minister Chuan Leekpai headed a high-level Thai delegation which visited Indonesia on April 26-28. During Chuan's visit, his first to Indonesia since his appointment as Premier in September 1992, he held talks with President Suharto, and also announced that Thailand intended to apply for membership of the non-aligned movement.

■ Last article p. 39195; reference article p. R84.

CAMBODIA

Withdrawal of Khmers Rouges from Phnom Penh

The *Khmers Rouges* withdrew all their officials from Phnom Penh, the Cambodian capital, on April 13. *Khmer Rouge* officials had been based in Phnom Penh since late 1991 under the provisions of the October 1991 peace accord [see p. 38511].

Khmer Rouge military liaison officials were also withdrawn from units of the UN Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) in the provinces, including Battambang, Siem Reap, Kompong Cham and Kompong Thom.

The *Far Eastern Economic Review* of April 22 reported that a senior *Khmer Rouge* official had stated that the withdrawal had been ordered in response to a speech delivered by UNTAC chief co-ordinator Yasushi Akashi to the all-faction Supreme National Council (SNC) on April 10. In his speech, Akashi guaranteed that the May elections in Cambodia would go ahead and warned that *Khmer Rouge* efforts to impede polling would result in "condemnation, isolation and even worse".

Khieu Samphan, the nominal *Khmer Rouge* leader, confirmed in a speech to the SNC on April 4 that his faction would not participate in the May elections. In his speech Khieu Samphan described the election as a "theatrical farce to hand over Cambodia to Vietnam" and "a gross violation of the [October 1991] Paris agreement".

The *Khmer Rouge* withdrawal from Phnom Penh coincided with a series of co-ordinated military offensives in the key northern and north-western provinces, apparently intended to cause maximum disruption to UN efforts to organize the elections. Commentators agreed that the *Khmers Rouges* were apprehensive about the possibility of a victory by the Phnom Penh-based State of Cambodia (SOC) regime in the elections.

Visit by UN Secretary-General

UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali visited Cambodia on April 7-8. His visit coincided with the opening of a six-week election campaign.

At a press conference on April 7, Boutros-Ghali announced that UN forces would be withdrawn from Cambodia on Aug. 22.

Issuing of statement by Paris signatories

The 18 signatory states of the October 1991 Paris peace agreement on Cambodia [see p. 38511] issued a joint declaration on April 23 urging Cambodia's rival factions not to disrupt the May elections. The statement called on "all Cambodian parties" to take measures necessary to end all acts of violence; it also expressed support for and confidence in Prince Norodom Sihanouk, the Cambodian head of state, for his "crucial role in . . . promoting national reconciliation".

Killing of UN soldiers and officials

Three unarmed Bulgarian soldiers serving with UNTAC were shot dead in Kompong Speu province on April 2 in what appeared to be a cold-blooded execution reportedly carried out by *Khmer Rouge* guerrillas [for death of first UNTAC soldier in March see p. 39371]. Another Bulgarian soldier died in a *Khmer Rouge* attack in Kompong Speu province on April 19.

A Japanese volunteer worker with UNTAC and his Cambodian interpreter were shot dead by unknown assailants in Kompong Thom province on April 8. Following the murder, many volunteers with responsibility for organizing the May elections in the more isolated rural areas were recalled to Phnom Penh.

In a statement issued on April 9, Toshio Nakayama, Director-General of Japan's Defence Agency, warned that Japan might withdraw its personnel from Cambodia if the *Khmers Rouges* increased their attacks in the run-up to the elections. On April 11 Gareth Evans, the Australian Foreign Affairs Minister and one of the chief architects of the Cambodian peace plan, said that Australia would withdraw its peacekeeping forces from Cambodia if the *Khmers Rouges* launched a "full-frontal assault" on UN personnel.

■ Last article p. 39371; reference article pp. R63-65.

VIETNAM**Fresh controversy over MIA issue**

The *New York Times* of April 12 carried a report of what it claimed to be fresh evidence indicating that the Vietnamese government was withholding information about the fate of US servicemen reported as missing in action (MIA) during the Vietnam War. Analysts were generally agreed that the controversy made it much harder for US President Bill Clinton to move towards the normalization of relations with Vietnam.

The report cited a Russian translation of a Vietnamese document, discovered by an Australian researcher in Moscow in early 1993, which suggested that in 1972 North Vietnam held 837 more US prisoners of war (POWs) than it had acknowledged. The original Vietnamese report was said to have been compiled by Lt.-Gen. Tran Van Quang, who flatly denied, however, that he was the author. In a statement issued on April 13 the Vietnamese Foreign Ministry categorically rejected the report as "ill-intentioned fabrication".

Gen. John Vessey, Clinton's special envoy, visited Vietnam on April 18-19, when he held talks with senior Vietnamese officials (and with Lt.-Gen. Quang) about the Russian document and other MIA issues. The *Far Eastern Economic Review* of April 29 reported that following his visit Vessey expressed doubts about the document's authenticity. However, the report cited a senior European diplomat in Washington as saying that even if Gen. Vessey convinced Clinton that the document was a fake, "the damage may have been done".

Visit by German Foreign Minister

German Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel visited Vietnam on April 2-4 at the end of a tour of Asian-Pacific countries.

Kinkel held talks with high-ranking Vietnamese officials, including Prime Minister Vo Van Kiet and Foreign Minister Nguyen Manh Cam. The two sides signed several co-operation agreements and, according to a report on Voice of Vietnam radio on April 5, Kinkel informed Vietnamese officials that Germany would resume its development aid to Vietnam, worth some DM 85,000,000 (about US\$53,000,000) annually.

The *Financial Times* of April 8 reported that BMW, the German car manufacturer, had signed an agreement to assemble a modest number of cars in Vietnam.

Visit by UN Secretary-General

UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali visited Vietnam on April 11-13. Boutros-Ghali's talks with leading Vietnamese officials centred on events in neighbouring Cambodia.

Major oil deal

The *Financial Times* of April 16 reported that a consortium of companies led by Australia's BHP Petroleum had signed contracts on April 15 to exploit Vietnam's Dai Hung ("Big Bear") oil field.

Dai Hung, off the coast of southern Vietnam, was the largest undeveloped field in Asia and the deal, which called for a total investment of some US\$1,500 million over 20 years, was one of the largest business deals involving Vietnam since the launch of the economic reform programme in the mid-1980s.

■ Last article pp. 39371-72; reference article pp. R85-86.

CHINA**Relations with USA**

The *Washington Post* of April 14 reported that China had "gone on a spending spree in the USA in recent weeks" in what analysts regarded as an attempt to influence President Bill Clinton's impending decision on whether to extend China's most-favoured nation (MFN) trading status. According to the report China had purchased aircraft, cars and oil equipment worth almost US\$1,000 million in order to demonstrate an effort to reduce its growing trade surplus with the USA.

Clinton had to decide by June 4 whether to extend for a further 12 months China's MFN status, which guaranteed that Chinese exports to the USA were subject to low tariffs. During his 1992 campaign for the presidential elections, Clinton had denounced his predecessor President George Bush's constant support for renewal of China's MFN status. Instead, Clinton had endorsed previous congressional attempts to link China's MFN status with improvements in China's human rights record and other issues. However, since his assumption of the presidency in January 1993 Clinton had said little about relations with China, and the MFN issue was

regarded as the first major test of his intended policy direction.

■ Last article pp. 39364-65; reference article pp. R65-66.

MONGOLIA**Nominations for presidential elections**

On April 10 a special congress of the ruling Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party (MPRP) chose as its candidate for the direct presidential elections (scheduled for early June) Lodongiyn Tudev, editor of the official party newspaper *Unen*, in preference to the incumbent President Punsalmaagiyn Ochirbat. The *Far Eastern Economic Review* of April 22 attributed this decision to Ochirbat's strident support for political and economic reform. Shortly after the MPRP congress, Ochirbat agreed to contest the presidential election under the banner of the small two-party opposition coalition of National Democrats and Social Democrats.

■ Last article p. 39272; reference article p. R77.

TAIWAN**Historic meeting with China**

Two days of talks with China, held in Singapore on April 27-28, represented the highest level of contact between the two sides since the Communist Party seized control of the Chinese mainland in 1949. Described as "un-official", the talks were nevertheless carefully defined in advance to cover only "practical and technical matters".

The Taiwanese delegation was led by Koo Chen-fu, 76, a multi-millionaire businessman, member of the standing committee of the ruling *Kuomintang* (KMT), and chair of the Straits Exchange Foundation (SEF), a semi-official body handling ties with China. China was represented by Wang Daohan, 78, a former mayor of Shanghai, head of the non-governmental Association for Relations Across the Straits (Arats), and reportedly close to President Jiang Zemin and to a lesser extent to Deng Xiaoping, China's elder statesman.

In concluding statements the two sides agreed that the main accomplishment of the talks had been to reach agreement on how to establish systematic contact, with a least four meetings to occur in a year.

The only note of discord came from the Taiwanese side when SEF secretary-general Chiu Chin-yi sternly rebuked Wang for publicly proposing on April 27 that direct shipping and air links be established. This was interpreted by Taiwan as an overtly political proposal beyond the nominal scope of the talks.

A 12-member Taiwanese opposition delegation, also in Singapore to monitor the talks, said in a

statement that the KMT government was "possibly stepping into a trap laid by China". They asserted "to China and the world: Taiwan is not part of China".

The way for the Singapore talks had been paved by a visit to Beijing, the Chinese capital, by a four-member SEF delegation on April 4, and a visit by Chiu on April 7 to 11.

Background

Analysts sought to elucidate the underlying reasons for the meeting, at a time when relations between both countries were at a low ebb.

They suggested that China's newly emerging conciliatory stance towards Taiwan was motivated by a desire (i) to marry its swiftly growing economy to Taiwanese capital resources and expertise; (ii) to gain access to new markets and, by association with a potential north-east Asia trading bloc, encompassing Japan, Taiwan, South Korea and possibly the resource-rich former Soviet far east, to avoid being penalized by international protectionist trade practices; and (iii) to support forces in Taiwan urging reunification with the mainland who were currently under increasing pressure from the opposition demanding more democracy and independence.

Important to Taiwan's KMT government were such issues as (i) the establishment of a legal framework to protect up to US\$8,900 million in Taiwanese investments on the mainland and two-way trade worth US\$7,000 million in 1992; and (ii) anxiety about the growing opposition and a desire to bolster re-unification and normalization moves to counteract it.

Both countries also wished further to ease travel restrictions to allow the reuniting of families and to facilitate an increasingly lucrative tourist trade.

Plane hijacking

The Singapore talks had been jeopardized by the Taiwan government's rejection, on April 7, of an official Chinese request for the extradition of two Chinese who the previous day had hijacked a Chinese airliner on an internal flight and forced it to divert to Taipei, the Taiwanese capital. They had both requested asylum. Justice Minister Ma Ying-jeou stated that it was proper to handle the case under Taiwan's legal system.

The released Chinese jet was requested to return via Hong Kong as direct flights to the mainland were still illegal, an instruction which the pilot reportedly ignored.

Violence in Assembly

The National Assembly was thrown into chaos for more than an hour on April 12 when more than 40 deputies traded punches and smashed chairs. The violence erupted when members of the opposition Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) accused the KMT of vote-fixing in elections of Assembly officers. KMT deputy Li Cheng-chung had been discovered with the ballot paper belonging to another KMT deputy who was absent.

US copyright demands

A US government threat to impose 100 per cent tariffs on imports from Taiwan worth an

estimated US\$600,000,000 annually, was reportedly instrumental in persuading the government of Taiwan to announce on April 8 that the importing of copies of US goods without prior approval would cease.

The International Intellectual Property Alliance, representing more than 1,500 companies, claimed that US copyright industries had lost a total of US\$669,000,000 in Taiwan in 1992 through piracy involving videos, compact discs and computer software.

An anti-piracy pact, signed by both sides in June 1992, was meant to solve the problem but Taiwan had failed to honour eight articles of the agreement, claiming that they violated the national interest. The threat of US retaliation forced the National Assembly to reconsider and pass the articles, although with some exceptions including retention of the right to import non-commercial products without the prior approval of copyright holders and their exclusive agents in Taiwan.

■ Last article p. 39365; reference article pp. R82-83.

HONG KONG

Resumption of talks between China and UK

China and the United Kingdom agreed on April 13 to begin talks on Hong Kong's political development, ending the deadlock which had arisen in October 1992 when the Hong Kong Governor, Chris Patten, announced details of his controversial plans to reform the colony's political system [see pp. 39143; 39190; 39273; 39317; 39365-66]. Patten, who was in London for talks with UK Prime Minister John Major on April 13, hailed the agreement as "a victory for common sense".

According to the *Financial Times* of April 15 the agreement came about as a result of a "genuine compromise". China accepted the presence of Hong Kong government delegates in the British negotiating team, having previously rejected any Hong Kong participation. The UK, for its part, agreed that the Hong Kong representatives would only play a "supporting" role in the negotiations.

The talks were held in Beijing, the Chinese capital, on April 22-24 and April 28-29. Both sides maintained a virtual news black-out on any progress.

The UK delegation was headed by Sir Robin McLaren, the UK's ambassador to China, and the Chinese delegation by Jiang Enzhu, a Vice-Foreign Minister. The British team was "supported" by various Hong Kong officials, including Political Adviser William Ehrman and Secretary for Constitutional Affairs Michael Sze.

Appointment of further Chinese "advisers"

The Chinese government formally appointed 49 "advisers" on affairs in Hong Kong at a ceremony in Beijing on April 2 [for appointment of first group of "advisers" in March 1992 see p. 38815].

The newly appointed "advisers" included Sir David Akers-Jones, a former Chief Secretary and acting Governor in Hong Kong. Sir David had openly opposed Patten's political reform plans and his appointment was widely regarded as a deliberate attempt by China to undermine the current Gov-

Creation of Monetary Authority

On April 1 the Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) was formally established as a quasi-central bank.

The creation of the HKMA, announced in October 1992 as part of Patten's reform programme [see p. 39143], involved the merger of the Office of the Exchange Fund and the Office of the Commissioner of Banking, which had previously shared most central-banking functions. The new body would be headed by Joseph Yam.

■ Last article pp. 39365-66; reference article p. R67.

NORTH KOREA

IAEA declaration of "non-compliance"

The Board of Governors of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in Vienna voted on April 1 to inform the UN Security Council that the government of North Korea was "in non-compliance" with the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT, which North Korea had signed in 1985—see p. 34269, but from which in March 1993 it had announced its withdrawal—see p. 39366—with effect from June 11). The vote followed the refusal of the North Korean authorities to allow IAEA personnel to inspect several nuclear sites within the country, and the passing of the March 31 IAEA deadline without the two sides having reached a compromise.

The move to refer the matter to the Security Council, the first occasion upon which the 36-year-old agency had declared a country to be "in non-compliance", was approved by 28 of the countries on the IAEA governing board. Four countries (India, Pakistan, Syria and Vietnam) abstained on the vote. The only two countries to vote against the decision were China—the last remaining significant ally of North Korea following the collapse of the Soviet Union—and Libya. At a press conference in Beijing, on March 31, Chinese Premier Li Peng reiterated his country's reservations concerning North Korea's actions, but also re-emphasized his belief in gradual international pressure rather than precipitous action.

Despite the IAEA's formal declaration against it, the North Korean government remained defiant and gave no indication that it would revise its March 12 announcement that it was to withdraw from the NPT, a decision due to become effective from June 12. This sense of impasse was heightened on April 6 when a draft Security Council resolution, drawn up by France, the United Kingdom and the USA and demanding that North Korea rejoin the NPT and meet its inspection

obligations under the treaty, was abandoned when it became clear that China was prepared to use its veto against it. It was reported that further intensive diplomatic efforts were under way in an attempt to break the deadlock, although the external stance of the participants remained uncompromising.

The Supreme People's Assembly (SPA—the North Korean legislature), which convened on April 7, unanimously adopted a resolution which claimed that “dark clouds of nuclear war are hanging heavily over the head of the nation” as a result of interference by “outside forces”. There were also bellicose statements from North Korean diplomats who warned that UN sanctions would be met with “effective self-defence counter-measures”, and who confirmed that North Korea did “not want war but [we are] not afraid of it”. In a statement issued on April 14 Hans Blix, the Director-General of the IAEA, stressed that there could be no compromise over the agency's demand to inspect the two nuclear sites at the centre of the dispute.

The North Korean Foreign Ministry issued a statement on April 10 in which it called for direct talks with the USA as a means of breaking the impasse. This idea was repeated on several occasions and, towards the end of April, it appeared likely that talks would take place under the auspices of the Security Council, which encouraged dialogue among all interested parties. In a statement published on April 21, the North Korean government suggested that it would only be prepared to rejoin the NPT and allow inspections if the USA agreed to abandon its annual “Team Spirit” joint military exercises with South Korea, to guarantee that it would not launch a nuclear attack upon the North, and to respect the existence of the socialist system in North Korea. It also demanded the right to inspect US and South Korean bases on the Korean peninsula. In a statement issued on April 23 Peter Tarnoff, the US Under-Secretary of State for Political Affairs, emphasised that any talks with North Korea would be specific to the nuclear issue and would be limited to persuading the North Korean government to reverse its decision on the NPT. He also stated that there could be no long-term improvement in US-North Korean relations or any sustained high-level diplomatic contact between the two countries until the nuclear issue had been resolved satisfactorily.

Further promotion of Kim Jong Il - Meeting of national legislature

North Korean President Kim Il Sung, the “Great Leader” around whom a personality cult of unprecedented proportions had been constructed, celebrated his 81st birthday on April 15. Reports that the veteran leader was in poor health continued to circulate, however, and were given credence by evidence of an acceleration in the transfer of power to his son and designated successor, Kim Jong Il, 51.

The fifth session of the Ninth SPA on April 9 unanimously elected the younger Kim as chairman of the National Defence Com-

mission of the Democratic People's Republic, a post which conferred almost unlimited control over the country's military forces. He retained his existing posts including that of member of the three-member presidium of the ruling Korean Workers' Party (KWP); secretary of the central committee of the KWP; and Supreme Commander of the Korean People's Army. The only remaining key posts not held by Kim Jong Il were those of president of the republic and general secretary of the KWP, both of which remained in the hands of his father.

The SPA session, which had opened on April 7, also heard a report from Premier Kang Song San on the prospects of reunification of the Korean peninsula. Kang called on the South Korean government to renounce its “dependence on outside forces” and to enter into a Korean dialogue “from an independent stand”. Before closing on April 9, the SPA session also endorsed a report on the fulfilment of the 1992 budget and approved a resolution outlining budgetary aims for 1993.

■ Last article p. 39366; reference article pp. R73-74.

SOUTH KOREA

Acceleration of anti-corruption drive

The anti-corruption drive of newly inaugurated President Kim Young Sam continued to gather pace during April. It also claimed its first victims among corporate executives and senior military figures as it extended into areas of South Korean society which, under Kim's predecessors, had been largely exempt from such scrutiny.

Kim also continued the process, begun in March [see p. 39367], of bringing the armed forces fully under civilian control by replacing those commanders who were associated with the military's past involvement in the political process. Two more commanders, Lt-Gen. Ahn Byong Ho and Lt-Gen. Kim Hyung Sun, were replaced on April 2.

Arrests of military figures

As investigators began to uncover evidence of systematic corruption in the armed forces, through the sale of promotions and the awarding of contracts, Kim informed military leaders on April 26 that the investigation would be pursued ruthlessly and that there would be “no sanctuary” for those who had committed crimes.

On the same day Adml. (ret'd) Kim Jong Ho, navy chief of staff in 1989-91, was detained in connection with the sale of promotions. He was formally arrested and charged on April 27, and on the following day five naval officers were arrested on charges of giving him bribes in return for promotions. On April 29 it was announced that five air force generals had been arrested and charged with giving bribes of 30,000,000 won (US\$1.00=795.921 won as at April 30, 1993) to former air force chief Chung Yong Hu in return for promotion. Chung was arrested on May 1.

The government also announced that it intended to investigate the circumstances surrounding the 1991 decision to switch the choice of the country's next generation of fighter aircraft from the McDonnell Douglas FA-18 to the F-16 produced by General Dynamics. The F-18 had been chosen in 1989, but the \$5,000 million contract was later shifted to the F-16 ostensibly for reasons of economy.

Arrests of leading business officials

The corruption drive claimed its first victims from big business circles when, on April 26, two officials from the Lucky-Goldstar chaebol, the country's third-largest conglomerate, and one former executive currently employed by Samsung were arrested for having allegedly taken bribes to secure lucrative construction contracts from housing co-operatives in Seoul.

The arrests followed an announcement on April 6 that unfair trading practices by chaebols would be investigated thoroughly, and that the country's anti-trust laws would be used to curb the economic power of the conglomerates. The announcement was made by Han Lee Hun, the chairman of the Fair Trade Commission, at a meeting with representatives from the largest 30 chaebols. Han criticized the chaebols for being so large that they stifled the growth of small and medium-sized businesses, and he indicated that new inheritance and gift taxes would be introduced in order to combat the tendency of chaebols to be owned by a single family.

■ Last article p. 39367; reference article pp. R74-75.

JAPAN

Cabinet changes - Economic developments - Foreign relations

Resignation of Foreign Minister

The Japanese Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, Michio Watanabe, 69, resigned on April 6 because of ill-health. He had been receiving hospital treatment for an illness which was widely rumoured to be cancer.

Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa chose Kabun Muto, a member of the Watanabe faction of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) and a former Minister of Agriculture (in 1990-91) and of International Trade and Industry, as his new Foreign Minister. Watanabe's post of Deputy Prime Minister was transferred to Justice Minister Masaharu Gotoda on April 8.

Although Watanabe's departure was expected to have little effect on Japanese foreign policy, it left a vacuum at the heart of the LDP at a time when it was already faced with the prospect of radical factional realignment.

Watanabe, the leader of the third largest faction within the LDP, had been Miyazawa's chief ally but also one of his most significant potential rivals. He made no secret of his ambition to succeed Miyazawa, behind whom he had finished second in

the contest for the leadership of the LDP in 1991 [see p. 38558]. The government formed by Miyazawa at that time had been based on the alliance of the Miyazawa faction (the second largest in the party) with Watanabe and with the leader of the then dominant Takeshita faction, Shin Kanemaru. This had given the Prime Minister the support of two-thirds of the LDP's legislators. In 1992 Watanabe's influence had increased further as Kanemaru had been forced out of politics by the Sagawa Kyubin scandal [see pp. 39140-41] and the Takeshita faction had disintegrated.

Following Watanabe's resignation the Foreign Affairs portfolio was first offered to former Finance Minister (in 1991-92) Tsutomu Hata, the founder of Reform Forum 21, a breakaway faction (composed of members of the former Takeshita faction) which was committed to fundamental political reform. Hata, however, in a move which was seen as further weakening Miyazawa's position, chose to remain outside the Cabinet.

Relations with Russia

At his first press conference, on April 7, Muto, while emphasising his determination to ensure the success of the forthcoming Tokyo meeting of the Group of Seven (G-7) Foreign and Finance Ministers on aid to Russia [see p. 39441], nevertheless made it clear that he had no intention of amending the government's policy of linking the provision of economic assistance with progress over the longstanding dispute over the Northern Territories.

In an apparent reversal of policy, Muto announced on April 13 (the day before the G-7 meeting) that the two issues were no longer linked, and that the success of the movement towards democratization and economic reform within Russia was of such overwhelming international importance that it took precedence over bilateral issues. Muto made it clear, however, that Japan would continue to press for the return of the four "Russian-occupied" islands.

The April 13 announcement followed strong Western pressure, particularly from the USA, in the negotiations prior to the G-7 meeting. It was also facilitated by an announcement from Russian President Boris Yeltsin on April 12 that he intended to make a state visit to Japan prior to the G-7 economic summit due to be held in Tokyo on July 7-9. The announcement went some way towards healing the diplomatic rift caused by Yeltsin's last-minute decision to cancel a trip which had been scheduled for September 1992 [see p. 39097].

Accordingly, at the opening session of the G-7 meeting on April 14, the Japanese offered an assistance package to Russia amounting to \$1,800 million. The bulk of the package, some \$1,100 million, was in the form of trade insurance, with some \$400 million in export credits, \$120 million in the form of technical assistance, \$100 million in humanitarian grants, and \$100 million-worth of technological assistance to the Russian nuclear industry.

The offer of nuclear assistance was particularly directed towards the disposal of nuclear waste and followed revelations in early April that large amounts of Soviet nuclear material had been

dumped in the Sea of Japan over the past 30 years. The Japanese government expressed its "concern" over a report released on April 1 by the environmentalist pressure group Greenpeace, which claimed that two Soviet nuclear reactors had been discarded in the Sea of Japan in 1978 and 16 others in the Kara and Barents seas between 1966 and 1991.

Following the announcement of the aid package, Foreign Minister Muto attempted to clarify further the relationship between Japanese aid to Russia and the issue of the Northern Territories. In an interview published on April 20 he indicated that, while Japanese aid extended within an international context was not linked to the resolution of the territorial issue, large-scale bilateral aid would be dependent upon a satisfactory resolution of the dispute.

Announcement of economic recovery plan

In addition to the announcement of the Russian aid deal, the Japanese government on April 13 unveiled a record 13,200,000 million yen package of new spending and tax concessions which was designed to stimulate the sluggish economy (US\$1.00=111.075 yen as at April 19, 1993). Miyazawa described the initiative as ensuring that the country would be able to achieve the official forecast of 3.3 per cent growth in the current fiscal year (ending in March 1994).

The package contained 4,170,000 million yen in fresh public works, 1,600,000 million in early purchases of land for public projects, and a commitment to accelerate the public works funds already budgeted for in the current fiscal year. Other measures included the investment of 1,150,000 million yen in "social infrastructure" projects in fields such as education, welfare and telecommunications, 3,500,000 million yen in new investment by local governments, 1,800,000 million yen in new funds for government housing loan companies (including the provision of lower interest rates for borrowers), and 1,910,000 million yen for government-affiliated financial institutions which specialised in the provision of funds to small and medium-sized companies.

The economic recovery plan proposed spending which exceeded the 10,700,000 million yen emergency package announced in August 1992 [see p. 39049]. As with the earlier package, however, there was considerable dispute over the extent to which it contained genuinely new expenditure as opposed to the reclassification of existing spending. There was also disappointment among retailers that the recovery plan did not contain a reduction in income tax.

Meeting between Miyazawa and Clinton

The timing of the economic recovery plan was determined by Miyazawa's visit to Washington DC on April 16 for his first summit with the newly inaugurated US President, Bill Clinton. By seeking to achieve economic stimulation through the strengthening of domestic demand, the package, in theory, was also designed to go some way towards assuaging US complaints over Japan's \$46,000 million merchandise trade surplus with the USA.

While there was considerable agreement on regional and security matters, the issue of the trade imbalance between the two countries was one of the key issues discussed by Clinton and Miyazawa. At a press conference held after the summit Clinton emphasised the pressing need for Japan to take steps to reduce its surplus and to allow US companies to have greater access to its domestic markets. "The cold war partnership between our two countries is outdated," he declared, and had to be replaced by "a new partnership based on mutual respect and responsibility".

Clinton also suggested that the Japanese surplus could be reduced by a revaluation of the yen. His remarks caused a rapid rise in the value of the yen against the US dollar, and on April 20 the yen reached a post-war high of 110.25. Its rapid appreciation forced remedial intervention by the Bank of Japan, and provoked a chorus of criticism from Japanese politicians and officials concerning the "improper" nature of Clinton's remarks. The rise in the yen was seen not only as a threat to export-led growth and economic recovery, but also as the first tangible sign of friction arising from a US administration which was generally deemed to be more assertive than its predecessor.

Imperial visit to Okinawa

Emperor Akihito on April 23 paid the first imperial visit to the island of Okinawa since the end of the Pacific War.

Ethnically different from the main Japanese islands, and not fully incorporated into Japan until the late 19th century, the sub-tropical island had been the scene of a fanatical defensive battle by the Imperial Japanese Army between March and August 1945 which cost the lives of 100,000 combatants and a similar number of civilians—around one-third of the island's population—and left an enduring legacy of bitterness among the inhabitants of Okinawa, which had been handed back to Japan by the USA in 1972 [see p. 25285]. Despite very tight security, Akihito's visit was marked by several acts of arson. During the course of the visit Akihito expressed his "loss for words" over the scale of the suffering inflicted upon the island, and offered his "deep condolences" to the victims.

■ Last article pp. 39367-68; reference article pp. R71-72.

MALAYSIA

Political developments in Sabah

The federal government's strained relations with the ruling state government in Sabah deteriorated further in April as a result of state-level political manoeuvring.

The state was ruled by the Sabah United Party (*Parti Bersatu Sabah*—PBS) which had been in conflict with the federal government and the United Malays National Organization (UMNO) since switching its allegiance from the ruling UMNO-dominated National Front coalition to the opposition a matter of days before the 1990 general election [for which see pp. 37780-81]. UMNO had subsequently attempted to work towards a merger with its state ally, the United Sabah National

Organization (USNO), the PBS's main state-level opponent. However, in April USNO itself divided, with five of its 11 legislative assembly members entering the ruling PBS-led coalition and the other six members leaving the party and joining UMNO.

Joseph Pairin Kitingan, the PBS leader and Sabah Chief Minister, used the USNO split as an opportunity to widen the PBS support base by bringing the Muslim USNO defectors into his Christian Kadazan-dominated Cabinet.

■ Last article p. 39372; reference article p. R76.

SINGAPORE

Prime Minister's visit to China

Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong paid an official visit to China on April 19-28, his first to China since his appointment as Prime Minister in November 1990.

Goh led a high-level Singaporean delegation which included Foreign Affairs Minister Wong Kan Seng and Finance and National Development Minister Richard Hu Tsu Tau. Discussions, which centred on economic co-operation, were held with senior Chinese officials, including Premier Li Peng and President Jiang Zemin.

■ Last article p. 39239; reference article p. R81.

PHILIPPINES

Presidential powers to tackle energy crisis

President Fidel Ramos on April 5 signed a bill passed by Congress granting him four of the 11 special emergency powers which he had requested to tackle the country's critical electricity shortages. In addition, three out of six new privately built gas or diesel-fired plants were due to be commissioned in April as a stopgap or "fast-track" response to the power shortage problems of the Luzon area (including Manila).

Power cuts of up to eight hours daily had provoked disruption, the laying-off of workers and widespread short-time working. These "brown-outs" were a major obstacle to achieving the Ramos government's 4.5 per cent economic growth target for 1993, now widely seen as unrealistic. The main new emergency powers granted by the April 5 legislation allowed the bypassing of normal bidding procedures in negotiating new power plant construction contracts, a reorganization of the National Power Corporation (Napocor), and an increase in Napocor's charges (despite a February 1993 restraining order by the Supreme Court against such increases). The prospect of higher charges was expected to help overcome the reluctance of foreign creditors to back future power projects. Talks with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) on a new credit programme were due to resume in mid-April on the expiration of the current IMF stabilization agreement, originally for 18 months until March 1992, but extended in that month and again in October 1992 until March 1993.

Renewed clashes with communist guerrillas

Clashes continued sporadically with the communist guerrillas of the New People's Army (NPA), despite Ramos's declared desire for peace agreements with the NPA, with the Muslim insurgents in the south and with right-wing army dissidents.

On April 10-11, in the largest clash since the inauguration of Ramos's presidency in June 1992, some 30 NPA rebels and two government soldiers were killed near Jones some 200 km north of Manila, according to official reports, while another 10 rebels died in two separate incidents.

■ Last article p. 39373; reference article pp. R79-80.

INDONESIA

Military appointments

Lt.-Gen. Wismoyo Arismunandar was appointed as Army Chief of Staff on April 8. Arismunandar, hitherto Deputy Army Chief of Staff, replaced Gen. Edi Sudradjat, who had been promoted to C.-in-C. of the Indonesian Armed Forces in February and became Defence Minister in March [see pp. 39325; 39372].

Arismunandar, President Suharto's wife's brother-in-law, was educated at the Megelang officer-training academy and had held a number of key military posts, including head of the Strategic Command. The *Far Eastern Economic Review* of April 22 reported that some analysts believed that Arismunandar possessed "the right credentials to become a presidential contender when Suharto eventually leaves office".

Other military appointments were announced in early April: Vice-Adml. Tanto Koeswanto, hitherto Eastern Fleet Commander, was appointed as Navy Chief of Staff; Air Vice-Marshal Rilo Pambuni, hitherto deputy for operations to the Air Force Chief of Staff, as Air Force Chief of Staff; and Lt.-Gen. Banurusman, hitherto Jakarta police chief, as head of the national police force. All three had previously served as aides to Suharto.

East Timor

UN-sponsored talks - Visit by UN envoy

Ali Alatas and José Manuel Durão Barroso, respectively the Indonesian and Portuguese Foreign Affairs Ministers, held a second round of UN-sponsored talks on East Timor in Rome on April 21 [for first round of talks in December 1992 see p. 39239].

No significant progress was achieved at the Rome meeting; both sides agreed to meet for a third round of talks in New York in September.

Amos Wako, UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali's special envoy, visited East Timor in early April. Those with whom he held talks included the Governor of the province, Abilio Osorio Soares, the Roman Catholic Apostolic Administra-

tor, the Rt. Rev. Carlos Filipe Ximenes Belo, and the imprisoned military commander of the Front for an Independent East Timor (Fretilin), José "Xanana" Gusmao.

Capture of new Fretilin leader

On April 3 Indonesian forces reportedly captured Antonio Gomes da Costa (also known as Mauhun), in the Ainaro district of East Timor. Costa had taken over as Fretilin military commander following Gusmao's capture in November 1992 [see p. 39196], and was reportedly replaced as leader by Konis Santana.

During the short period he had led Fretilin, Costa had reportedly initiated a relatively aggressive military strategy. The *Far Eastern Economic Review* of April 29 reported two confirmed Fretilin attacks in March in which eight Indonesian soldiers had been killed.

■ Last article p. 39372; reference article pp. R69-71.

PAPUA NEW GUINEA

Incursions into Solomon Islands territory

Strained relations between Papua New Guinea (PNG) and the Solomon Islands were emphasised at the beginning of April when Solomon Islands police alleged that four PNG soldiers had landed on the Solomon island of Ovau, just south of Bougainville, on April 4-5 and subsequently also attempted a landing on the larger Mono Island.

Radio Australia reported on April 8 that the PNG government had admitted the incursion on April 5, defending it on the grounds of a build-up of arms by the Solomon Islands and the existence of a plan to hand over weapons to the secessionist Bougainville Revolutionary Army (BRA).

Reports that PNG troops had landed on another of the Solomon Islands on April 8 and claimed sovereignty were denied by the PNG government on April 13.

On April 15 Prime Minister Paias Wingti telephoned his Solomons counterpart Solomon Mamaloni and agreed to "maintain dialogue".

Death of rebel leader

Radio Australia reported on April 28 that Ken Savia, a rebel leader and health minister in the self-proclaimed Bougainville interim government who had been arrested by Papua New Guinea soldiers in February, had been tortured and killed while in detention. The reports were corroborated by the human rights organization Amnesty International.

Measures against crime

On April 27 the government announced new law and order measures to control the current crime wave. These included a replacement of the legal convention that suspects were innocent until proven guilty with the concept that once a prima facie case was established it was up to the accused to prove innocence.

Identification cards were to be introduced as well as new repatriation laws and restrictions on freedom of movement.

Australian company's withdrawal from gold mine project

On April 4 the Australian mining concern Conzinc Riotinto of Australia Ltd (CRA) announced that it was withdrawing from a major gold mine project in the Mount Kare region on the grounds that staff were being threatened by rival gangs of armed landowners.

■ Last article pp. 39372-73; reference article pp. R93-94.

NEW ZEALAND

By-election humiliation for government

The ruling National Party government of Prime Minister Jim Bolger suffered a humiliating by-election defeat on April 17 at the hands of Winston Peters, a former party member and Cabinet Minister.

An outspoken maverick, Peters had been dismissed as Minister for Maori Affairs in late 1991 for "disloyalty", having repeatedly criticized the government for its laissez faire economic policies and its alleged failure to honour its election promises. Despite his differences with the party, however, Peters continued to record the highest opinion poll rating of any politician in New Zealand, with around 22 per cent support compared with 7 per cent for Bolger. His continuing attacks upon the government led to his exclusion from the National Party parliamentary caucus. He responded by resigning his seat and contesting the by-election as an independent.

Despite winning the by-election by a huge 11,000-vote margin, Peters refused to speculate on his future plans. Nevertheless, with a general election due by November 1993, there was continuing speculation that he was considering launching a new political party, which offered the prospect of a fundamental realignment of the political forces of the centre-right.

■ Last article p. 39101; reference article pp. R92-93.

SAARC

Annual summit

The seventh annual summit of the South Asian Association for Regional Co-operation (SAARC), postponed in January [see p. 39277] and again in February, was held in Dhaka, Bangladesh, on April 10-11.

The meeting, attended by leaders of all seven member countries, was overshadowed by mass demonstrations protesting against the participation of India's Prime Minister P. V. Narasimha Rao and blaming his government for the destruction in December of the Babri

mosque at Ayodhya in the state of Uttar Pradesh [see pp. 39222; 39270].

A joint declaration adopted by the summit on April 11 committed members to the eradication of regional poverty [see pp. 38684; 39149] by the year 2002. Summit leaders also called for the creation of a regional development bank to finance joint industrial ventures.

A general tariff framework, termed the South Asian Preferential Trade Agreement (SAPTA), aimed at lowering or abolishing tariffs on intra-regional trade [see pp. 38918; 39012], was initialled by SAARC foreign ministers at the summit's concluding session. Details of the agreement were expected to be negotiated over the next three years before formal ratification by SAARC.

Discussion of bilateral issues, prohibited under the SAARC charter, took place outside the scope of the summit. Topics dominating these private bilateral talks among summit leaders included deteriorating Indo-Pakistani relations over Pakistan's alleged role in recent bomb explosions in Bombay [see p.

39370], and the sharing of river waters between India and Bangladesh [see pp. 38913; 39195; 39371].

SAARC's current chair, Bangladeshi Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia, announced that the next SAARC summit would be held in India in 1994.

■ Last article p. 39277; reference p. R86.

IN BRIEF

BANGLADESH: The Dhaka High Court on April 22 declared Gholam Azam, leader of the *Jamaat-i-Islami-Bangladesh*, to be a citizen of Bangladesh; Azam had lost his citizenship for allegedly collaborating with Pakistani military forces during the 1971 war of independence [see also pp. 38967; 39007; 39194-95].

TURKMENISTAN: Interior Minister F. Charyyarov was dismissed on April 3 for what were officially described as "serious shortcomings in the work of the ministry". There was no announcement of a replacement.

EUROPE

RUSSIA

Referendum campaign - Constitutional issues - Other internal developments

The President of the Russian Federation, Boris Yeltsin, received an important personal vote of confidence in the April 25 referendum, while also securing majority support for his socio-economic reform programme. The referendum was widely seen as having provided a renewed mandate for the beleaguered Yeltsin, thereby strengthening his position in the struggle between executive and legislature—over the parameters of constitutional authority and the pace and direction of the reform process—which had dominated Russian politics in recent months.

Background to referendum - Ruling by Constitutional Court

Four questions appeared on the referendum ballot papers, formulated by the Congress of People's Deputies as follows:

(1) Do you have confidence in the President of the Russian Federation, Boris Yeltsin?

(2) Do you approve of the socio-economic policies carried out by the President of the Russian Federation and the government of the Russian Federation since 1992?

(3) Do you consider it necessary to hold early elections for the presidency of the Russian Federation?

(4) Do you consider it necessary to hold early elections for the people's deputies of the Russian Federation?

The proposal to hold a referendum had originated with Yeltsin in December 1992 as a means of attempting to strengthen the powers of the presidency vis-à-vis the legislature. Yeltsin's original proposal—which focused upon suggested constitutional revisions—had been scheduled for April 11, but was rejected by the Eighth (extraordinary) Session of the Congress of People's Deputies in March 1993. Yeltsin reacted by threatening to introduce special presidential rule and by calling for a vote of confidence in the President. At the end of March the Ninth (extraordinary) Session of the Congress approved a referendum for April 25, but formulated four questions different from those originally suggested by Yeltsin [see p. 39378].

Official results of April 25 referendum

Question	Votes in favour			Votes against		Invalid votes
	Number of votes	As % of votes cast	As % of electorate	Number of votes	As % of votes cast	
(1) (Confidence in Yeltsin)	40,405,811	58.7	37.7	26,995,268	39.2	1,468,868
(2) (Approval of reform policies)	36,476,202	53.0	34.0	30,640,781	44.6	1,642,883
(3) (For early presidential elections)	34,027,310	49.5	31.7	32,418,972	30.2	2,316,247
(4) (For early legislative elections)	46,232,197	67.2	43.1	20,712,605	19.3	1,887,258

In deciding upon the referendum questions the Congress stipulated that, in order to be approved, each question was required to achieve the support of more than 50 per cent of the registered electorate rather than merely a simple majority of the votes cast. This requirement was denounced by Yeltsin's supporters as an attempt to predetermine the outcome of the ballot in order to demonstrate a lack of popular support for the President. This in turn was seen as a prelude for seeking further curtailment of Yeltsin's powers or even for demanding his resignation. Accordingly, supporters of the President raised the matter before the Constitutional Court on April 8, and on April 21 the Court overturned the requirement in relation to the first two referendum questions. The Court determined that only the third and fourth questions required an approval rating of more than 50 per cent of the entire electorate, as only they were of constitutional significance.

Referendum campaign - Cabinet changes

The decision of the Constitutional Court provided a boost of morale for Yeltsin's supporters. Nevertheless, the President's campaign proved a largely lacklustre affair with Yeltsin making only three forays outside Moscow, and failing to display the dynamism and energy which had characterized his 1991 election campaign. His central strategy was to portray himself as the personification of progress and reform, and his opponents as communists who sought a return to the failures of the past. In addition to emphasising the lack of a progressive alternative, Yeltsin also offered to adopt a more "flexible approach" in order to reduce the degree of social dislocation attendant upon the economic reform programme.

To this end, on April 15, he appointed Oleg Lobov as a First Deputy Prime Minister. The appointment meant that Lobov, who had ultimately been assigned the Economics portfolio vacated by Andrei Nechayev in March, was placed in a position of authority over Boris Fedorov, the reformist Deputy Prime Minister and new Minister of Finance. (Following the referendum, at the end of April Yeltsin appointed Oleg Soskovets as a third First Deputy Prime Minister.)

Yeltsin also offered concessions designed to appeal to specific groups. These included the promise of increased benefits to students and military veterans; the rescinding of a decree increasing petrol prices; rent curbs for state housing; the lowering of taxes on coal exports; greater protection for workers threatened by the bankruptcy of enterprises; and a commitment to curb unemployment in various regions. Statements by government ministers after the referendum, however, suggested that the implementation of such campaign pledges would be delayed because of insufficient resources.

In the campaign against Yeltsin, prominent roles were played by the Chair of the Supreme Soviet, Ruslan Khasbulatov, and by Vice-President Aleksandr Rutskoi. Yeltsin's opponents alleged that he was becoming increasingly dictatorial and was intent upon using a referendum victory as a platform from which to crush the legislature as an inde-

pendent and representative institution. Yeltsin's supporters were also accused of large-scale corruption in connection with the huge Russian privatization programme.

The opposition was organized around a hastily compacted Committee in Defence of the Constitution and the Constitutional Structure, comprising the Russian Unity parliamentary faction, the National Salvation Front, the hardline Union of Officers, and Vladimir Zhirinovskiy's Liberal Democratic Party.

Whereas Yeltsin's supporters called for a "yes" vote to all questions except the third, the opposition called for a "no" vote in response to the first two questions. The opposition's recommendations regarding questions three and four were split, however, with the nationalists campaigning in support of early elections and the communists opposing them. This division highlighted the significant ideological differences within a Russian opposition movement which was united primarily around its enmity towards Yeltsin.

Referendum results

Voter turnout was higher than anticipated, with 64.5 per cent of the electorate choosing to participate. Although final figures were not released until early May, provisional results available from April 27 had given an accurate picture of how the votes had been cast.

Yeltsin's supporters hailed the results as having provided the President with a popular mandate for constitutional reform and, thus, with having strengthened his position in the struggle with the legislature. Nevertheless, legally, question four had not achieved sufficient support to force early elections. At a press conference on April 27 the Chairman of the Central Electoral Commission, Vasilii Kazakov, confirmed that the referendum results had precluded the possibility of early elections not only for the presidency but also for the legislature, and that the existing representative institutions would be required to serve out the remainder of their allotted terms.

There were few significant regional fluctuations in the voting. Opposition to the President was strongest in the North Caucasus (except in North Ossetia where Yeltsin benefited from federal support for the region in its territorial dispute with Ingushetia), in areas of central Russia, and in territory near Ukraine's northern border with Russia. In general, the more separatist republics and those areas where reformers had made least impact upon the institutions of power displayed most hostility to Yeltsin and his policies.

In several areas additional questions were included on the questions to the ballot paper. In the city of St Petersburg and the regions of Sverdlovsk and Chelyabinsk there were proposals to upgrade their constitutional status, while in the Republic of Bashkortostan voters were asked if they supported greater economic autonomy from the Russian Federation. In response to the most significant of these additional questions the voters of St Petersburg expressed 70-80 per cent support for the convocation of a constituent assembly, an idea for which Yeltsin had expressed support.

Unveiling of draft constitution

Prior to the referendum, on April 23, Yeltsin's office released details of a new draft constitution which the President would seek to enact in the event of receiving a vote of confidence in the April poll. The constitutional blueprint, which was unveiled in full on April 30, involved a strong presidency, a bicameral legislature and an independent judiciary.

The draft envisaged a federal Russian state, and incorporated the Federation Treaty within its provisions. Within this framework cultural and ethnic freedoms were guaranteed, as were individual rights. The political system was based on representative government and universal suffrage, with a popularly elected president serving as head of state, head of government and the "main guarantor of the indivisibility and integrity of the state". The bicameral legislature would consist of a council of the federation, composed of representatives of entities within the Russian Federation, and a state *duma* consisting of deputies elected from territorial constituencies.

Economic assistance packages from West

In addition to the referendum, the Yeltsin administration was also boosted during April by several significant packages of Western economic assistance. [For economic assistance announced by Japan during April see p. 39419].

The weekend summit meeting between Yeltsin and US President Bill Clinton in Vancouver on April 3-4 included the agreement of a \$1,600 million US aid package for Russia, to be distributed during fiscal 1993 [for details of the summit, the aid package and bilateral issues, see pp. 39423-24]. Clinton also promised to ease restrictions on Russian imports and exports, and to exert greater pressure upon other members of the Group of Seven (G-7) industrialized countries, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank to provide increased aid to Russia.

Immediately prior to the summit, on April 2, the "Paris Club" of Western creditor countries had moved to ease Russia's severe debt repayment problems by rescheduling the country's foreign debt of \$80,000 million. This move, which had been sought by Russia since the end of 1991, was estimated to represent a reduction in debt servicing obligations of around \$15,000 million for the Russian government during 1993.

A package of financial assistance for Russia worth \$43,000 million was agreed at the G-7 summit of Foreign and Finance Ministers in Tokyo on April 14-15 [see p. 39441]. The package had three basic components: some \$14,000 million for macro-economic stabilization (with particular emphasis on the struggle against inflation); a similar amount for structural reform (mainly trade assistance, aid to the energy sector and help for small and medium-sized businesses); and the \$15,000 million arising from the debt rescheduling agreed on April 2 [see above].

Although the package exceeded the \$24,000 million promised in 1992, and was in addition to bilateral commitments of more than \$4,000 million announced by the USA, Japan and the UK during April, only a small proportion of the \$43,000 million package was genuinely new aid. In addition to the \$15,000 million of debt rescheduling money already agreed, some \$10,000 million was to be in the form of export credits most of which had already been offered by G-7 countries on a bilateral basis. A further \$10,000 was in the form of a \$4,000 million IMF standby loan and a \$6,000 billion rouble stabilization fund, both of which had been offered in 1992 but not taken up, and almost \$5,000 million was in World Bank loans for structural reform, most of which had been under negotiation for months in advance of the summit. Most estimates assessed the level of genuinely new multinational aid within the Tokyo package as no more than \$3,300 million, of which \$3,000 million was in the form of an IMF loan.

Trial of coup leaders

The trial of 12 leading figures in the abortive August 1991 military coup [see pp. 38368-73] opened in Moscow's Supreme Court on April 14. The 12, who included Oleg Shenin, currently the leader of the newly revived Communist Party of the Soviet Union, faced charges of treason and the abuse of office.

The defendants unsuccessfully challenged the right of the court to try a case which related to the now defunct Soviet Union, and failed in their claim that the proceedings had been rendered invalid through procedural improprieties by the prosecution. Nevertheless, on April 16 the trial was adjourned indefinitely after one of the defendants, Aleksandr Tizyakov, was taken ill with a heart complaint.

Developments in regions

The struggle between Yeltsin and the Russian legislature was mirrored at a lower level by a series of constitutional conflicts within various republics. These events received considerable press attention as each was seen as a possible model for the outcome of the conflict between Yeltsin and the legislature.

In Mordovia a simmering conflict erupted on April 3 when the local legislature voted to abolish the office of elected president, currently held by Vasilii Guslyannikov. In the ensuing struggle both the legislature and the executive received support from their Russian Federation counterparts, with Yeltsin issuing a presidential decree on April 8 to confirm Guslyannikov in office. Yeltsin's intervention was ignored by the local legislature which, on April 20, completed the process of restoring executive authority to a 12-member council of ministers, the form in which it had existed prior to the institution of an elected presidency in December 1991. Yeltsin's intervention was also undermined by the Supreme Soviet which, on April 27, revoked the Russian President's decree under Article 109 of the Constitution which enabled the legislature to suspend presidential decrees which it deemed as unconstitutional pending a ruling from the Constitutional Court. Local fears that a strong showing for Yeltsin in the April referendum might encourage him to declare presidential rule in Mordovia were reflected by a level of support of only 38 per cent among voters in the republic.

A similar struggle was evident in the republic of Chechnya where the President, Dzhakhar Dudayev, had been in conflict with the legislature for several months. On April 17 Dudayev issued a series of executive decrees which imposed presidential rule, disbanded the legislature, dismissed the government, and instituted a midnight to dawn curfew. This move followed two days of mass demonstrations demanding the resignation of President, government and legislators, and the payment of overdue wages and student grants. Meeting in an emergency session on April 18 the legislature annulled all of the presidential decrees (except that dismissing the government, a move for which the legislature had been pressing for some time), and voted to begin impeachment proceedings against Dudayev. On the following day the Chechen Constitutional Court formally overturned Dudayev's decrees on presidential rule and the dissolution of the legislature.

The first presidential elections in the republic of Kalmykiya, a small agricultural republic on the Caspian Sea, were held on April 11, and saw a young rouble millionaire, Kirsan Ilyumzhinov, win some 65 per cent of the vote. Speaking after his victory, Ilyumzhinov stated his intention to dissolve the republic's legislature and to replace it with a small "professional" parliament. He also suggested that Kalmykiya should become "a testing ground for the political and economic reform needed in Russia as a whole".

■ Last article pp. 39378-80; reference article pp. R121-22.

RUSSIA-USA

Clinton-Yeltsin summit

In a move signalling a shift away from traditional concerns with issues of disarmament President Bill Clinton of the United States and President Boris Yeltsin of Russia, at their first summit meeting in Vancouver, Canada, on April 3-4, initiated a new strategic economic alliance aimed at boosting Russia's reform movement.

Underpinned by an unexpectedly large US financial aid package totalling \$1,600 million, the alliance marked the start of what Clinton hailed as a "new democratic partnership". Yeltsin, who described the offer as "a large, wise package which will make history", promised to initiate "honest competition", and take "mutually reinforcing steps" to further Russian reform.

Details of US aid package

The latest US aid package to Russia, three-quarters of which was reportedly earmarked for non-governmental organizations, was notable for its attention to details of management and supervision aimed at ensuring that it reached assigned targets and avoided duplication. The package included more than \$932 million in credits for grain imports and investment guarantees; \$470 million in technical assistance, training, and programmes for dismantling nuclear weapons; and some \$214 million in grants for food and medical supplies.

It was agreed that the package would be administered, pending approval by other members of the Group of Seven (G-7) industrialized countries, by a central co-ordinating office in Moscow headed by a US official. Also specified were precise amounts set aside for individual sectors, and agreement on delivery of the aid according to strict deadlines.

Potential hurdles stemming from Cold War US regulations hindering assistance to Russia, notably the 1974 Jackson-Vanik amendment linking grain shipments to the relaxation of Soviet restrictions on (principally Jewish) emigration [see pp. 26850-52; 26993-96], would be reviewed to facilitate the package's implementation. A similar review was expected for rules governed by the Co-ordinating Committee for Multilateral Export Controls (COCOM) restricting technology sales to the former Soviet bloc [see pp. 39218; R149]. US officials stressed, however, that successful implementation of the package would depend upon restraining the Russian Central Bank, whose monetary policy had apparently contributed to Russia's spiralling inflation.

A preliminary breakdown of the aid package suggested that the largest component—about \$900,000,000—would be for subsidised food sales and grants using the US Food for Progress programme, thus overcoming problems of blocked grain sales caused by Russian arrears amounting to an estimated \$630,000,000. (According to reports on April 5 the \$700,000,000 earmarked for new grain sales to Russia were aimed at ensuring a resumption of farm exports stalled since November 1992.)

A separate \$194,000,000 food assistance programme, also involving Food for Progress, would cover direct delivery to those in need, and stocks for Russian commodity auctions.

A private-sector development package worth about \$148,000,000 would be allocated in 1993 (i) to start a Russian-American enterprise fund for small businesses (\$50,000,000); (ii) to promote privatization (\$60,000,000); and (iii) to encourage agri-business co-operation (\$20,000,000).

A "Democracy Corps Initiative", worth another \$48,000,000 covering programmes on education, law, administration and the media would be designed to assist Russia's transition from authoritarian rule.

Assistance with energy and environment programmes would amount to \$38,000,000, with a further \$215,000,000 available in 1993 for the dismantling of Russian nuclear, chemical and other weaponry.

A \$6,000,000 officer resettlement plan would be allocated to house returning Russian officers from the Baltic states. The offer, made in response to an appeal from the Russian government, came amid a renewed threat by Yeltsin on April 5 to reschedule Russian troop withdrawals from Estonia and Latvia, in retaliation against the treatment of Russian minorities in those countries.

A trade and investment segment was dominated by credits and insurance worth \$232,000,000 from the

EXIMBANK and the Overseas Private Investment Corporation. Included in the scheme were a \$82,000,000 EXIMBANK loan to finance the sale of material and expertise to repair an oil pipeline system, and \$150,000,000 in support of a large oil development project.

In a move designed to support Russia's integration into the international trading system, the USA agreed to back Russia's membership of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT—at which it had observer status—see p. 37474), and to extend to Russia the benefits of the generalized system of preferences (GSP—established in 1970-71 for developing countries—see pp. 25376-77), granting preferential access into the USA for a wide range of products.

Other summit issues

Clinton and Yeltsin also discussed foreign and security issues, and Clinton offered an apology for, and promised a review of, a recent submarine collision in the Barents Sea.

Reports said that Yeltsin had won US assurances that Russia would be permitted to sell military equipment abroad, still a major source of much-needed hard currency.

■ Last article pp. 39378-80; reference article pp. R121-22.

AZERBAIJAN

New Armenian offensive

Armenian forces launched an offensive in the last week of March into Azerbaijani territory around the disputed Nagorny Karabakh region. Their advance on several fronts left them in control of around one-tenth of Azerbaijan's territory.

Attacking across the border from Armenia itself, from within Karabakh, and northwards from the Lachin corridor, Armenian forces had by April 4 overrun Kelbajar district, seizing the whole strip of Azeri territory separating Armenia from Karabakh. In the first week of April Armenian fighters also attacked southwards from Karabakh towards the town of Fizuli. Armenia denied, however, that its regular troops were involved in the fighting.

President Abulfaz Elchibey introduced a state of emergency throughout Azerbaijan for 60 days from April 3.

At least 40,000 refugees fled Kelbajar district following the Armenian assault. On April 14 the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) launched an emergency airlift of relief supplies. Meanwhile, grave concern was expressed by the Azeri authorities for the welfare of at least 15,000 people believed still to be trapped in Kelbajar district.

UN Security Council statement - Turkish reaction

On April 7 the UN Security Council issued a statement expressing "serious concern" about developments and calling for a ceasefire and withdrawal of Armenian forces from occupied areas, but rejecting Turkey's proposal

that it condemn "Armenian aggression against Azerbaijan". The Turkish Foreign Ministry described this statement as "far from reflecting an effective international reaction". Turkish President Turgut Özal, speaking on April 13 at the start of a four-day state visit to Azerbaijan, warned that Turkey would never allow the creation of a "Greater Armenia", but he gave mixed signals about Turkish willingness to intervene militarily on the Azeri side.

A week before travelling to Baku, Özal had told journalists that Turks should not be afraid to "show our teeth", and on April 14 he stated that Turkey was considering a military alliance with Azerbaijan. However, at the end of his visit he appeared to rule out direct military intervention, while advocating international pressure and unilateral economic sanctions, including strengthening an existing embargo on the transport of goods to Armenia via Turkey.

Meeting of Azeri and Armenian Presidents in Ankara

Elchibey and Armenia's President Levon Ter Petrosian met on April 21-22 when both were in the Turkish capital, Ankara, to attend Özal's funeral [for Özal's death see p. 39434].

Elchibey told reporters afterwards that informal peace negotiations would resume under the auspices of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE). Azerbaijan had withdrawn from the CSCE-sponsored talks on April 6 because of the Armenian offensive, but a temporary ceasefire in Nagorny Karabakh from midnight on April 19 allowed a CSCE observer delegation to visit the enclave. A CSCE meeting in Prague on April 26-28 ended without agreement, however, and with the Azeri side insisting on an Armenian troop withdrawal before peace talks resumed.

UN Security Council resolution

The UN Security Council adopted on April 30 a resolution demanding an immediate ceasefire and the withdrawal of all Armenian units from Azerbaijani territory.

Resolution 822, adopted unanimously, acknowledged Armenian involvement but did not directly accuse Armenia of aggression. It called for a resumption of negotiations within the CSCE framework (this being greeted by the Armenian side with an expression of the hope that it would "help to bring Azerbaijan back to the negotiating table" without preconditions); it also asked the UN Secretary-General to study and report on the situation, including the events in Kelbajar district.

Removal of Interior Minister - New Prime Minister

Iskender Kahmidov resigned as Interior Minister of Azerbaijan on April 16 and was replaced on the same day by Maj.-Gen. Abdulla Allakhverdiyev.

A local news agency linked Kahmidov's resignation to his "scandalous activity", apparently alluding to an incident on March 27 when he reportedly beat up Zardusht Ali Zade, leader of the opposition Social Democratic Party, and also to a live television debate in which Kahmidov insulted both government and opposition figures.

Panakh Guseinov was appointed on April 28 as Prime Minister, as advocated by the Azerbaijani Popular Front and despite the hostility of opposition parties; he was succeeded as State Secretary by another leading Front member, Ali Kerimov.

Guseinov announced his intention of restructuring the government by strengthening its role in economic policy vis-à-vis the president's office; he created a new post of First Deputy Premier for economic reforms, under the hitherto acting Prime Minister Ali Masimov.

■ Last article p. 39333; reference article p. R100.

BYELARUS

Vote on CIS security treaty

On April 9 the Supreme Soviet voted by 188 votes to 34 in favour of Byelarus joining the collective security agreement of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), signed by the majority of CIS members in May 1992 [see p. 38922; for April extraordinary CIS summit see p. 39425].

Prime Minister Vyacheslau Kebich supported joining the agreement, arguing also for the creation of an economic union with Russia, Ukraine and Kazakhstan. However, Stanislau Shushkevich, Chair of the Supreme Soviet and head of state, declared that joining the agreement would be counter to the July 1990 Declaration of State Sovereignty which committed Byelarus to the goal of neutrality [see p. 37617]. As was his constitutional right he called for a referendum on the issue; he threatened to resign if this referendum supported signature of the CIS security agreement, declaring that "my main goal is to strengthen an independent, neutral state". The Supreme Soviet was to debate the issue in mid-May.

■ Last article p. 39333; reference article p. R103

GEORGIA

Currency coupon - Relations with Ukraine - Abkhazia conflict

Georgia introduced on April 5 a temporary currency coupon, at parity with the Russian rouble, in response to a severe rouble cash shortage exacerbated by continuing inflation. The coupon was seen as a step towards a separate Georgian currency.

Georgian Parliamentary Chairman Eduard Shevardnadze visited Ukraine on April 12-13, signing a treaty of friendship and co-operation; 20 other agreements notably covered inter-parliamentary co-operation and economic relations. Both sides stressed their "complete mutual understanding".

Shevardnadze also welcomed a Ukrainian offer to act as intermediary for efforts to resolve the conflict over Abkhazia. In a speech broadcast on April 12, making what was assumed to be a reference to

Russia, he had spoken of a joint Georgian and Ukrainian interest in acting as a counterweight to a "third force".

Abkhazia conflict - Alleged Russian involvement

The *Independent* of April 10 quoted Shevardnadze as saying, after a ceremony marking the fourth anniversary of the killing of Georgian demonstrators by Soviet troops in Tbilisi on April 9 [see p. 36593], that Russia wanted "to stay in the Transcaucasus by all means" and that "what is happening in Abkhazia is planned in Moscow" by "the known forces that are fighting [Russian President] Yeltsin".

Russian Defence Minister Pavel Grachev, at a meeting on April 6-9 in the Russian Black Sea port of Sochi with Georgian Prime Minister Tengiz Sigua and Defence Minister Tengiz Kitovani, rejected what Sigua had described as hard evidence of Russian military involvement. Discussion of the situation and of ceasefire proposals was limited, according to the Russian side, by the absence of Abkhaz representatives. Agreement was reported, however, that a demilitarized zone 3 km wide should be created between Georgian and Abkhaz forces, and that Russian troops currently stationed in Abkhazia and elsewhere in Georgia should remain until the end of 1995.

After a brief lull in fighting, bombardment of the Georgian-held Abkhaz capital, Sukhumi, resumed on April 29. The Georgian side complained that shelling originated from a Russian military laboratory at Eshera, not covered under the demilitarized zone agreement reached at Sochi, which, they claimed, was effectively a base for the Abkhaz separatists and a front for Russian military involvement.

Shevardnadze, who was in Sukhumi on April 29 (reportedly narrowly escaping injury), reiterated his "absolute readiness" for negotiations on a political settlement, but warned that the Georgian army would shell rebel-held towns unless the bombardment of Sukhumi ceased.

Casualty figures - Appointment of UN representative

Georgian Radio on April 16 gave figures of 1,008 Georgian soldiers killed and more than 3,500 wounded in the Abkhazia conflict to date. On the same day, the ITAR-TASS news agency in Moscow quoted an Abkhaz state committee's figure of 116 civilians killed and 336 wounded in the shelling of Sukhumi.

On April 30, ITAR-TASS reported that 46 Russian servicemen had been killed and more than 10 wounded in Georgia in 1992, and that instances of "unlawful treatment" of Russians in Sukhumi were becoming more frequent.

It was announced in late April that Edouard Bruner was to be the special representative for Georgia of the UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali, and that he would provide assistance in efforts to settle the Abkhazia conflict.

Shevardnadze repeated his call for more active involvement by international organizations, including the UN [see p. 39286], on April 20 when receiving a Polish delegation, and on April 23 when

receiving the leader of the CSCE mission in Georgia, Istvan Gyarmat.

■ Last article p. 39380; reference article pp. R108-09..

UKRAINE

Economic problems

During April the government of Prime Minister Leonid Kuchma sought to override opposition to its economic reforms and to bring inflation under control after the value of the karbovanets (coupons introduced in place of the rouble in November 1992—see p. 39204) fell by 46 per cent against the dollar in one day on March 30. This fall was caused by the National Bank issuing subsidised credits worth 1,230,000 million karbovanets to state industry and agriculture.

Deputy Finance Minister Mykola Syvulsky declared that "this single step wiped out almost all of the progress we had made in the previous three months" when the currency had appeared to be stabilizing against the dollar and when inflation had been reduced to 20 per cent per month.

On April 9 the Supreme Council approved the 1993 budget after four days of debate [see also p. 39381]. According to the Moscow-based Economic News Agency on April 22, it provided for revenue of 4,632,429 million karbovanets, expenditure of 5,615,727 million karbovanets, and thus for a deficit of 983,298 million karbovanets. Value added tax of 28 per cent was to be levied.

Government appointments

On March 26 Deputy Prime Minister Vasyl Yevtukhov was appointed acting First Deputy Prime Minister in place of Ihor Yushkovsky who had resigned earlier in the month [see p. 39381].

On April 13 Viktor Pynzenyk was dismissed as Minister for Economic Reform and replaced by Yuri Bannikov (although Pynzenyk remained a Deputy Prime Minister). Bannikov was head of Orisont, a military microelectronics company.

On April 26 President Leonid Kravchuk announced the creation of a new Ministry of Nationalities Affairs and Migration to be headed by Oleksandr Yemets.

Military leadership change

It was reported on March 25 that Col.-Gen. Anatolii Lopata had been named Chief of General Staff and First Deputy Defence Minister.

■ Last article pp. 39380-81; reference article pp. R126-27.

COMMONWEALTH OF INDEPENDENT STATES

Extraordinary heads of government summit

An extraordinary meeting of the heads of government of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) was held in Minsk on April 16.

Ostensibly the meeting was called to discuss an appeal made in mid-March to CIS heads of state by Russian President Boris Yeltsin to strengthen the CIS through the creation of new mechanisms of co-ordination among its constituent members. With a routine heads of state meeting already scheduled for Yerevan on April 30, however, there was considerable speculation that Yeltsin wished to use the meeting to raise his own profile as part of his campaign in the Russian constitutional referendum on April 25 [see pp. 39421-22].

The summit was attended by all CIS heads of state except the Turkmen President (absent on health grounds) and the Kirgiz President, who had a prior engagement. Although no tangible results were achieved, the meeting provided a forum for the expression of support for Yeltsin and the reform movement in Russia. Both Yeltsin and the President of Kazakhstan, Nursultan Nazarbayev, emphasised that those states which had not yet signed the CIS charter [see p. 39282] should decide whether or not they wished to be member states. Non-signatories, stated Yeltsin, would remain "outside the main channels of co-operation within the framework of the Commonwealth, with all the consequences which stem from that".

■ Last article pp. 39282-23; reference article p. R130; Byelarus vote on joining collective security agreement p. 39424.

BOSNIA-HERCEGOVINA

Bosnian Serb rejection of Vance-Owen peace plan

The self-styled Bosnian Serb Assembly, meeting in emergency session in the north-eastern Bosnian town of Bijeljina on April 25-26, voted overwhelmingly to reject the proposed territorial arrangements in the Vance-Owen peace plan for Bosnia [see pp. 39277-78] which had been endorsed by Bosnian Croats and Muslims [see p. 39375]. Its announcement that a final decision on the peace plan would be left to Bosnian Serb inhabitants by means of referendum on May 15-16, was dismissed by Western governments as a stalling tactic.

The Assembly had already rejected, on April 2, a resolution allowing for the conditional acceptance of the Vance-Owen plan, with headline members dismissing as unacceptable the proposed allocation of only 43 per cent of the territory to Serbs (compared with the 70 per cent currently occupied by their forces). However, the Bosnian Serb leader

Radovan Karadzic had been careful at this stage not to reject the plan outright; instead he had called for direct negotiations between the three warring parties—Bosnian Croats, Muslims and Serbs—on the territorial issue still in contention. This had been rejected immediately by Bosnia's (Muslim) President Alija Izetbegovic.

Condemnation of Assembly decision by Serbia

The Bosnian Serb Assembly decision of April 26 met with international condemnation including, crucially, from Serbia and the rump Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY, i.e. Serbia and Montenegro)—the Bosnian Serb patrons and suppliers—who were immediately subject to harsher UN sanctions [see p. 39427]. At the end of April, with the isolation of the Bosnian Serb stance apparently underlined by a vote in Serbia itself to endorse the Vance-Owen plan, Karadzic was indicating willingness to reopen discussions, especially in the context of an offer by the Greek government to host an all-party conference in Athens to discuss the conflict.

The Presidents of the FRY, Serbia and Montenegro—Dobrica Cosic, Slobodan Milosevic and Momir Bulatovic—had sent FRY Foreign Affairs Minister Vladislav Jovanovic in person to Bijeljina to urge acceptance of the Vance-Owen plan. Jovanovic had informed the Assembly that talks with Lord Owen on April 21 in the Serbian capital, Belgrade, had produced agreement over "secure corridors" linking non-contiguous Bosnian Serb provinces, and that guarantees existed for UN protection of future demilitarized Serb areas. Eleventh-hour talks on April 25 in Belgrade, attended by Lord Owen and Karadzic, had failed to produce a solution, however, with Bosnian Serb Assembly speaker Momcilo Krajisnik, also present, stating that the Bosnian Serbs wanted "compact territories, not some corridors".

Many analysts interpreted the Bosnian Serb decision as a calculated gamble that the West's response to the crisis would remain tentative and that there would be no direct international military intervention.

NATO response

Attending a meeting with senior North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) military officials in Brussels on April 27, Gen. Colin Powell, Chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff, reportedly made it clear that the US government would not contemplate military action without specific authority from the UN. Field Marshal Sir Richard Vincent, chair of NATO's Military Committee, who delivered a scathing attack on Western politicians and insisted that they should first specify what they wanted to achieve in Bosnia before advocating any kind of military action, stated that there had been "great unanimity of view" at the meeting.

The UN Security Council's approval on March 31 of a "no-fly zone" over Bosnian airspace [see p. 39375] had been endorsed by NATO on April 2. However, reflecting apprehensiveness about the long-term implications of confronting Bosnian Serbs with force, NATO had laid down strict guidelines for engagement with Serbian military aircraft, providing that those violating the ban would be first warned off and only if the warning were ignored would they then be shot at. Serbian ground forces could not be attacked.

On April 12, NATO fighters drawn from the French and Netherlands and US air forces had begun to enforce the "no-fly zone". The UK and Turkey confirmed that they would also be sending squadrons. [For German Constitutional Court decision on April 8 allowing German forces to participate in missions enforcing the no-fly zone see p. 39432.]

On April 12, NATO fighters drawn from the French and Netherlands and US air forces had begun to enforce the "no-fly zone". The UK and Turkey confirmed that they would also be sending squadrons. [For German Constitutional Court decision on April 8 allowing German forces to participate in missions enforcing the no-fly zone see p. 39432.]

Controversy over suggestions of lifting of arms embargo to ally supplies to Bosnian Muslims

In the USA, throughout April, the Clinton administration, conscious of public opposition to direct military intervention, lacked consensus about an appropriate response. Increasingly, however, the view was expressed (notably in Congress) that the UN arms embargo approved in September 1991 [see p. 38422] should be lifted to allow arms supplies to the Bosnian Muslims, and that allied air strikes might be used to reinforce sanctions and diplomatic pressure.

European governments remained in general opposed to such steps (particularly since there were no US soldiers actually present in Bosnia as part of the UN peacekeeping effort) and concentrated instead on the stiffening of sanctions [see below].

EC Foreign Ministers, meeting on April 25 in Middelfart, Denmark, reached their own "consensus", taking the view that lifting the arms embargo would risk escalating and prolonging the conflict. Only Germany, embroiled in its own crisis on the use of its forces abroad [see p. 39432], supported the lifting of the ban. (In the United Kingdom former Prime Minister Baroness Thatcher also took this position in widely publicized comments on April 13 which were believed to reflect a growing but still minority current of opinion in the country.) The UK government also emphasized that limited air strikes on Serb supply and communication lines would remain as the "least worst" option. Lord Owen had advocated such strikes to break the deadlock.

Some confusion remained over the implications of the Middelfart EC decision to support a unilateral UK pledge to Canada to use force if 150 Canadian UN soldiers currently in the besieged Muslim town of Srebrenica [see below] came under attack from Serb forces.

Imposition of tougher sanctions

On April 5, impatient with delays in securing UN approval of tougher sanctions against Serbia and the FRY, the EC threatened, in the face of UK objections, unilaterally to implement its own tougher package.

Russia, pursuing its own diplomacy with Serbia in an attempt to make the Bosnian Serbs sign the peace plan [see p. 39427], had on April 9 asserted its opposition to the tightening of the UN trade embargo. The USA, in deference to the domestic

political difficulties of Russian President Boris Yeltsin facing hardline opposition from pro-Serbian conservatives, was instrumental in bringing about the UN Security Council decision on April 12 to postpone the vote on tighter sanctions until after the Russian referendum on April 25 [for which see pp. 39421-22]. However, when the Foreign and Finance Ministers of the Group of Seven (G-7) leading industrialized countries met in Tokyo on April 14-15 (principally to discuss aid to Russia—see pp. 39422; 39441), their call for tougher UN sanctions was also echoed by Russia.

The new UN sanctions were approved on April 17 and by 13 to none with two abstentions, from China and from Russia (which had agreed not to use its veto, under combined US, European and non-aligned country pressure), with effect from April 27.

The EC Foreign Ministers on April 25 reinforced their commitment to making tougher UN sanctions work, by agreeing to double the number of EC sanctions monitors. The Czech, Bulgarian and Romanian governments also endorsed tougher sanctions, respectively on April 25, 26 and 29.

On April 27 Yeltsin, his position now reinforced by the results of the Russian referendum [see p. 39422], warned the Bosnian Serbs that they could not expect Russian protection if they continued to reject the Vance-Owen plan.

New Serb offensive

Serb irregular forces crossed over on April 27 from the Serb-controlled Krajina region in Croatia into the Bosnian Muslim enclave surrounding the north-western town of Bihac, where some 300,000 Muslims had been subjected to continual Serb siege and shelling. French UN troops in Bihac, reportedly reinforced to 1,900, had received UN orders to use force to protect civilians.

Bosnian Serb troops were also reported the same day to have attacked the north eastern towns of Gorazde and Gradacac and villages near the town of Brcko. They were also reported to be moving in on the northern Muslim stronghold of Tuzla to which thousands of refugees from the eastern Muslim town of Srebrenica had recently been evacuated.

There were many reports of the harassment of UN convoys. In the Serb shelling of a UN aid convoy near the Muslim town of Zenica, two relief workers were reportedly seriously injured.

Ending of siege of Srebrenica

The bitter year-long siege of Srebrenica, one of the three remaining Muslim enclaves in Serb-dominated eastern Bosnia, effectively ended on April 18, after the town had become the focus of world media attention due to indiscriminate Serb shelling of its civilian population (56 civilians reportedly killed on April 12 alone) which had galvanized the UN to increase sanctions.

Senior UN officials denied that Srebrenica was effectively being delivered to the Serbs under the April 18 ceasefire, brokered by the UN Protection

Force in Yugoslavia (UNPROFOR), under which a 150-strong company of UN Canadian troops was brought in to evacuate the bulk of the remaining 30,000 inhabitants, most of whom were reportedly desperate to leave. The UN troops also disarmed remaining Muslim defenders to comply with a Serb-imposed deadline of April 21. UN helicopters meanwhile ferried out 500 of the most seriously wounded to Tuzla and also had to fly in Serb commanders to oversee the destruction of Muslim weaponry.

The arrival of a six-member fact-finding UN Security Council mission on April 23, composed of members from non-aligned countries, underlined continuing concern about the UN's peacekeeping role.

French troop withdrawal threat

The French government announced on April 28 that it would consider withdrawing its 5,000 troops in the Yugoslav region unless the UN clarified its role more clearly and improved its organization on the ground.

France had earlier in the month threatened to recall the UN's (French) Commander in Bosnia, Gen. Philippe Morillon.

Croat-Muslim fighting

A ceasefire was signed on April 29 between Bosnian Croats and Muslims, but reports of sporadic clashes continued.

During April the region around the central Bosnian town of Vitez had endured fierce fighting, which had more recently spread to the towns of Jablanica and Kiseljak, west of the capital, Sarajevo (which remained under constant attack by Serb forces). Thousands of Muslims reportedly fled from what was described as renewed "ethnic cleansing".

Vance successor

The Norwegian Foreign Minister Thorvald Stoltenberg confirmed on April 2 that UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali had invited him to become special UN mediator in the Balkan crisis in place of Cyrus Vance, 76, who was to step down in May. [For Stoltenberg's replacement in the Norwegian government see p. 39435.]

■ Last article pp. 39374-75; reference article pp. R101-02.

YUGOSLAVIA

Serbian endorsement of Bosnian peace plan

The Vance-Owen peace plan for Bosnia was endorsed by the Serbian republican assembly on April 28, marking the more conciliatory stance now being adopted towards the West by Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic. This stance was reported to have led, however, to a serious split in the ruling alliance between Milosevic's Socialist Party of Serbia (SPS) and the ultra-nationalist Serbian Radical Party led by Vojislav Seselj.

More stringent UN sanctions [see below] had been imposed on April 26 on the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY, i.e. Serbia and Montenegro), to increase pressure on Milosevic to force Bosnian Serb compliance with the plan.

Western analysts attributed Milosevic's position to the view that his Serbian protégés in Bosnia had achieved most of their aims and should now seek to achieve political rather than military consolidation.

UN sanctions

The new UN sanctions, described by FRY and Serbian leaders as a "gross injustice" and a "gross error", came into operation on April 27, building on the measures already introduced in May 1992 [see p. 38918].

The new sanctions allowed for (i) a freeze on Yugoslav government and private funds in foreign banks; (ii) reinforcement of the blockade on shipments of goods through Yugoslavia via the Danube river; (iii) prohibition of commercial shipping entering Yugoslav waterways; (iv) prohibition of the passage of Yugoslav ships through the territorial waters of UN member countries; (v) prohibition of the entry of goods into Yugoslavia by land, except for medicine, food and other humanitarian supplies; (vi) impounding of Yugoslav ships, trains, vehicles and aircraft in the territories of UN member countries if they were violating sanctions; and (vii) prohibition of the provision of most services to Yugoslavia by UN member states, except those services necessary for humanitarian reasons.

The US government also announced on April 26 a freeze on all US business in the FRY, and the blocking of all Yugoslav assets in the USA.

Foreign and Defence Ministers of the Western European Union (WEU) had decided on April 5 to tighten the blockade on supplies to the FRY via the Danube river, by increasing the number of patrol vessels and custom checks teams.

Russian call on FRY to halt supplies to Bosnian Serbs - Statement by Cosic

Russia's Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev on April 27 called on the Yugoslav leadership to halt supplies to Bosnian Serbs, stating that the Vance-Owen plan was the only "realistic" solution to the crisis.

Vitaly Churkin, Russia's special envoy to the peace talks, had been one of various foreign politicians, including Greek Prime minister Constantine Mitsotakis and UN officials, who were involved in shuttle diplomacy in early April in an effort to make Milosevic persuade the Bosnian Serbs to sign the peace plan. Churkin had reportedly gained the approval of Milosevic and of FRY President Dobrica Cosic for a compromise approach, whereby they would persuade the Bosnian Serbs to sign the uncontested parts of the Vance-Owen map for Bosnia and to negotiate the rest.

Cosic stated on April 28 that the FRY would not take any "radical measures", or close its borders with Bosnia, to force the Bosnian Serbs to sign the peace plan. He called instead for a UN-sponsored international conference to solve the Balkans crisis.

Devaluation of dinar

The government was forced into a drastic devaluation of the dinar on April 9, in an effort to bring it in line with its real value, reflected in the black-market rate. As at April 30, 1993, US\$1.00=61,211 new dinars, compared with US\$1.00=751.23 new dinars on April 8.

Rampant hyper-inflation, put at an annualized rate of 20,000 per cent for 1992, continued with a month-on-month inflation rate of 225 per cent in March.

ICJ call

The International Court of Justice (ICJ) in The Hague called on Serbia on April 8 to prevent acts of genocide in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Carrying no legal authority, the call was the result of the first accusation of genocide to come before the ICJ since it was founded in 1946.

■ Last article pp. 39375-76; reference article pp. R128-29.

CROATIA

New government

A new government was sworn in on April 3, following the resignation of the previous government on March 29 [see p. 39375].

The new Prime Minister Nikica Valentic stated that the new government's main tasks would be the return of refugees from the Bosnian war and ending the conflict in the Krajina region claimed by rebel Serbs. He promised to strengthen the democratic process by ensuring the freedom of the press and privatization of the media. On the economy, he declared that the central tasks were to revive production and begin public works. Taxes would be reduced to increase employment, and strict mon-

New Croatian Cabinet

Nikica Valentic Prime Minister
 *Mate Granic Deputy Prime Minister
 *Vladimir Sek Deputy Prime Minister
 Borisav Skegro Deputy Prime Minister
 *Gojko Susak Defence
 *Ivan Jarnjak Internal Affairs
 *Zdenko Skrabalo Foreign Affairs
 *Zoran Jasic Finance
 Zlatko Tomcic Construction and Environmental Protection
 Ivan Cermak Industry, Shipbuilding and Energy
 Vesna Girardi-Jurkic Education and Culture
 Ivan Tarnaj Agriculture and Forestry
 Ivica Mudrinic Shipping, Transport and Communications
 *Ivica Crnic Justice and Administration
 *Josip Juras Labour and Social Welfare
 Niko Bulic Tourism and Trade
 Branko Jeren Science
 *Cedomir Pavlovic without portfolio
 +Ivan Majdak without portfolio
 Zlatko Matesa without portfolio
 *Retained portfolios.
 +Changed responsibilities.

etary, fiscal and wages policies would be followed in order to curb inflation.

Russian visits

An 11-member delegation from the Russian Supreme Soviet, headed by the chairman of the committee for international affairs, Yevgeny Ambartsumov, arrived in the Croatian capital, Zagreb, on April 14-15 to discuss the crisis in Bosnia-Herzegovina and the latest outbreak of fighting in the Serb self-proclaimed Republic of Serbian Krajina (RSK). The special Russian envoy to the Yugoslav peace talks, Vitaly Churkin, also met President Franjo Tudjman to discuss the current situation in Bosnia and Croatia.

The Croatian army was reported to have launched a fresh offensive against Krajina on April 1-2, concentrated on the northern Dalmatian front from April 5.

■ Last article p. 39375; reference article pp. R103-04.

MACEDONIA

Vote of confidence over name

The granting of UN recognition [see p. 39442] under the compromise name Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM), accepted in deference to Greek insistence that the country should not be allowed to call itself simply Macedonia, led to the opposition tabling a vote of no confidence, which the government of Prime Minister Branko Crvenkovski survived with the support of 62 out of 120 deputies in the National Assembly in Skopje on April 13.

Ljupco Georgievski, leader of the internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization-Democratic Party for Macedonian National unity (VMRO-DPMNE), the largest opposition party, described the UN compromise as an "insult to the Macedonian people". The government was also blamed for the depth of the current economic crisis.

Denmark on April 13 became the first member of the European Communities (EC) to recognize FYROM. Albania had done so on April 9.

■ Last article p. 39328; reference article pp. R116.

ALBANIA

Government reshuffle

Albanian Prime Minister Aleksander Meksi announced on April 6 a Cabinet reshuffle affecting ministers from the Democratic Party (DP), the dominant element in the coalition government since April 1992, of whom two were replaced by non-party figures.

Agron Musaraj, 43, became Minister of Public Order. His predecessor Bashkim Kopliku retained the rank of Deputy Chairman of the Cabinet and became responsible for economic reforms. Rexhep Uka, also hitherto a Deputy Chairman of the Cabinet, became Minister without Portfolio with

responsibility for local government affairs. Uka's portfolio of Agriculture and Food went to Petrit Kalakula. The two new non-party ministers, Xhezair Teliti and Edmond Spaho, took charge respectively of Education and Tourism, replacing Ylli Vejsiu and Osman Shehu.

Border incident - Relations with Bulgaria and Turkey

Albania on April 28 issued a diplomatic protest and also wrote to the UN Security Council over the "provocative" shooting by Yugoslav border guards of Albanians who had crossed the frontier unwittingly; eight or 10 people had reportedly died in such incidents on March 25-27 [see also p. 39328 for shooting by Macedonian border patrol in February].

Albania's recently concluded friendship treaties with Bulgaria [see p. 39376] and with Turkey were ratified by the People's Assembly on April 23. A further agreement with Bulgaria, on defence co-operation, had been signed on April 7 after meetings in Bulgaria at ministerial level.

Papal visit

Pope John Paul II visited Albania on April 25, arriving in Tirana and celebrating mass in Shkodër where he ordained four bishops, re-establishing the Catholic ecclesiastical hierarchy in the formerly officially atheist country whose Catholic population was now estimated at some 13 per cent.

The mass of consecration was attended by President Sali Berisha and Prime Minister Meksi, and, among others, the Albanian-born 1979 Nobel Peace laureate Mother Teresa of Calcutta. Also present were representatives of the Muslim community (an estimated 50 per cent of the population) and the Autocephalic Orthodox Church (to which an estimated 18 per cent of the population belonged—see p. 39104 for opposition by political leaders to appointment of a Greek Orthodox

bishop, Anastas Januallatos, as Exarch).

■ Last article p. 39376; reference article p. R98.

BULGARIA

Prime Minister's visit to Russia

Prime Minister Lyuben Berov paid an official visit to Russia on April 19-20 for talks with his Russian counterpart Viktor Chernomyrdin.

Berov and Chernomyrdin ratified a 10-year treaty of friendship and co-operation negotiated during a visit to Bulgaria by Russian President Boris Yeltsin in August 1992 [see p. 39061]. The two sides also signed protocols on co-operation in the fields of science, culture, education and law enforcement. Although a trade protocol was not signed, agreement was reached on the establishment of a joint bank for clearing payments in national currencies.

President's visit to Kuwait

President Zhelyu Zhelev paid an official visit to Kuwait on April 25-26.

■ Last article p. 39376; reference article p. R102.

CZECH REPUBLIC

Relations with Germany

On April 26 at the end of a three-day visit to Germany President Vaclav Havel met with Chancellor Helmut Kohl and President Richard von Weizsäcker.

Havel reported afterwards that the German government would look at ways of compensating Czech victims of Nazism, while the Czech government was considering possible forms of compensation for Sudeten Germans. Kohl pledged his support for Czech rapprochement with the European Communities (EC) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), and hoped for the speedy conclusion of an agreement on the return to the Czech Republic of refugees whose asylum applications had been rejected.

Relations with Slovakia - Opening of stock exchange - Bankruptcy law

Michal Kovac made his first official visit to Prague, the Czech capital, as Slovak President on March 30-31, holding talks with both Havel and Czech Prime Minister Vaclav Klaus.

Havel and Kovac agreed to meet at least three times a year. An agreement on establishing border crossings was signed. However, there was no resolution of differences over the division of former Czechoslovak assets [see p. 39281]. Even though four out of the nine remaining agreements required to resolve these differences were initialled on April 7, the Czech government continued to refuse to issue shares to Slovak investors in Czech privatized companies [see p. 39376].

On April 6, when the Prague stock exchange reopened after more than 50 years, there was trading only on the secondary market, until the problem of Slovak-owned shares could be resolved.

On April 22 a bankruptcy law came into effect; this provided for a period of three to six months during which debtors and creditors of insolvent companies could seek a settlement, failing which bankruptcy would be declared. Unemployment was expected to rise appreciably as a result.

Sentence on Dubcek's driver

A military court in Ceske Budejovice on March 31 imposed a 12-month suspended sentence on Jan Reznik, the driver of the car in which Alexander Dubcek suffered the car accident which led to his death in November 1992 [see pp. 39199-200].

Planned reduction of armed forces

Defence Minister Antonin Baudys stated on April 26 that the Czech Republic was to cut its enlisted armed forces from 106,500 to 65,000 by 1995.

■ Last article p. 39376; Czechoslovakia reference article pp. R104-05.

SLOVAKIA

HZDS negotiations with opposition

On April 6 seven deputies from the ruling Movement for a Democratic Slovakia

(HZDS) announced that they were leaving the HZDS to join an "independent deputies' caucus" formed by Milan Kňazko, who had been dismissed from the Cabinet in March [see pp. 39376-77].

Meanwhile on April 3 the leadership of the Slovak National Party (SNS), which had lost its only Cabinet post with the March resignation of SNS leader Ľudovít Černák [ibid.], approved the party officially joining the opposition.

With the HZDS now controlling only 66 out of 150 parliamentary seats, Prime Minister Vladimír Mečiar opened talks with opposition parties, including the renamed communist Party of the Democratic Left (SDL) led by Peter Weiss.

After a meeting on April 9 Weiss refused Mečiar's offer of a Cabinet post but declared that the SDL was prepared to support the government in areas which conformed with its own election programme.

On April 22 Mečiar presented his government's programme which in a vote on April 26 won the backing of 104 deputies of the 124 present.

In Bratislava on April 16 more than 4,500 people demonstrated in protest against the government's economic and social policy. According to *Le Monde* of April 18 the budget deficit had risen to 13,000 million koruna (some US\$460 million) in the first three months of 1993, hard currency reserves had fallen so that they did not cover three months' worth of imports, exports had dried up and further bankruptcies threatened to increase unemployment (already at 13 per cent of the labour force).

Reduction in military service period

Defence Minister Imrich Andrejčák announced on April 27 that compulsory military service would be shortened from 18 to 12 months from July 1, 1993.

■ Last article pp. 39376-77; Czechoslovakia reference article pp. R104-05.

HUNGARY

New FIDESz chair

At a congress in Debrecen on April 16-18 the Federation of Young Democrats (FIDESz) completed its transformation from a youth movement (formed in 1988—see p. 36164) to a political party with the election of its parliamentary leader, the 30-year-old lawyer Victor Orbán, to the new post of chair. The age limit of 35 for members was lifted.

By-election

In a by-election in Bacs-Kiskun county on April 4 Tamas Nagy, a joint candidate of the new Party of the Republic and the Agrarian Association, was elected in place of a deceased Smallholder (FKgP) deputy.

Three earlier polls had been declared invalid since fewer than 25 per cent of the electorate voted, but

this time the turnout reached 28.27 per cent. Nagy won 36.67 per cent of the vote as against 35.94 for his closest rival, the Hungarian Socialist Party (MSzP) candidate.

Ban on use of "extremist" symbols

On April 14 parliament approved legislation banning the wearing or display either of Nazi or of communist symbols. The government had introduced the bill in response to criticism of its allegedly lax treatment of young skinheads in neo-Nazi uniforms who had prevented President Árpád Göncz from speaking at national day celebrations on Oct. 23, 1992.

Military co-operation with Germany

On April 6 the German and Hungarian Defence Ministers signed a military co-operation agreement which included provision for the training of Hungarian officers in Germany and a gift of spare parts and training aircraft from the former East German forces.

■ Last article p. 39330; reference article pp. R111-12.

POLAND

Withdrawal of Peasant Alliance from government

On April 28 the Peasant Alliance (PL) withdrew from the seven-party centre-right coalition formed in July 1992 and led by Hanna Suchocka [see pp. 39016-17], in protest at the government's agriculture policy. Gabriel Janowski, the PL chair, had already resigned as Minister for Agriculture and Food Economy on April 8 after the coalition decided to introduce minimum prices for wheat and rye which were below the market rate.

The two remaining PL ministers presented their resignations. They were Zygmunt Hortmanowicz, Minister for Environmental Protection, Natural Resources and Forestry, and Jerzy Kaminski, a Minister without portfolio. The departure of the PL left the government with the support of 177 of the 460 members of the *Sejm* (lower house of parliament).

Electoral law - Pensions and privatization legislation

On April 15 the *Sejm* approved by 239 votes to 132 with four abstentions an electoral law intended to give greater parliamentary stability by reducing the number of parties with parliamentary representation. At the last *Sejm* elections in October 1991, 29 parties had won seats.

The new law still required approval by the Senate (upper house) and from President Lech Wałęsa. Parties would have to win at least 5 per cent of the vote nationally to be allocated seats from the 391 constituency seats; alliances would need 8 per cent. In order to win any of the 69 seats elected on the basis of votes cast for national lists, the party list would have to win at least 7 per cent of the vote in a constituency. Lists of candidates in each constituency would require 5,000 signatures for registration (3,000 previously). Polling day would be switched from a Sunday to a Saturday.

On April 28 the *Sejm* rejected Senate measures scaling down the indexation of pensions and invalidity benefits, by a sufficiently large majority to overturn the Senate's decision.

Finance Minister Jerzy Osiatynski said that he would take the matter to the Constitutional Court since the *Sejm*'s decision ran counter to the 1993 budget approved in February [see p. 39330]. It would increase expenditure by 23,000,000 million zloty (about US\$1,400 million), with the result that the budget deficit would exceed the limits expected by the international financial community.

On April 30 the *Sejm* approved privatization legislation, covering some 600 enterprises, by 215 votes to 178 with 22 abstentions. An earlier bill was defeated in March but presented in modified form in early April [for details see p. 39377]. Its approval was attributed to the support of deputies from the former communist Democratic Left Alliance (SLD); of the PL deputies nine voted in favour and eight against.

Indictment of Jaruzelski

On April 27 the naval prosecutor in Gdynia near Gdansk charged Gen. Wojciech Jaruzelski, President in 1985-90, with "organizing actions" in Gdynia to suppress a workers' protest in December 1970 as a result of which at least 44 people were killed [see pp. 24389-91]. Jaruzelski was Defence Minister at the time.

The trial began on March 10, and was adjourned the same day, of 24 people including former Interior Minister Gen. Czesław Kiszczak who were accused of involvement in the killing of nine miners in Katowice on Dec. 17, 1981 [see p. 31396].

Corruption

Earlier, on Feb. 18, indictments were issued against six people accused of fraud and embezzlement in connection with the Foreign Debt Servicing Fund (FOZZ), which had been used by Finance Ministry officials to repurchase Poland's foreign debt at a reduced price [see pp. 38351-52; 38399]. According to the Polish Press Agency PAP on March 25 the director and deputy director of FOZZ were accused of embezzling over US\$5,000,000 and of causing the state to lose a further \$80,000,000.

On March 26 Grzegorz Wojtowicz, a former president of the National Bank of Poland arrested in September 1991 [see p. 38449], and four other leading banking officials were charged with fraud and corruption. Wojtowicz was charged with causing the Treasury losses of nearly 138,000 million zloty (\$8,300,000) through improper supervision of the banking system.

It was announced on March 31 that proceedings against Bogusław Bagsik and Andrzej Gasiorowski, the two owners of the Art-B Corporation which was involved in illegal banking activities [see pp. 38399; 38449], were being suspended because they had fled to Israel in August 1991 (shortly before a

warrant was issued for their arrest) and could not currently be indicted.

50th anniversary of Warsaw ghetto uprising

On April 19 ceremonies were held to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Warsaw ghetto uprising [see p. 6198]. Among those present were Itzhak Rabin, on the first visit by an Israeli Prime Minister; US Vice-President Al Gore; and the president of the German *Bundestag*, Rita Süssmuth.

The previous day Roman Catholic bishops joined rabbis for an ecumenical service in Warsaw's only synagogue, while more than 50 anti-Semitic protesters were arrested at a neo-Nazi demonstration.

The World Jewish Congress had lifted a threat to boycott the 50th anniversary ceremonies, following a decision by the Vatican on April 1 that the 14 Carmelite nuns living in a convent built in 1984 in the grounds of the concentration camp at Auschwitz (Oswiecim) should be transferred to a site nearby. The nuns were supposed to have moved following a 1987 agreement [see p. 37011], but had not done so.

■ Last article p. 39377; reference article pp. R118-19.

ROMANIA

Trade union protest rallies

Tens of thousands of striking Romanian workers joined protest marches across the country on April 12 to press for higher wages and restraints on price increases. The strikes and demonstrations had been called by the National Free Trade Union Confederation of Romania. Some of the demonstrators called for the resignation of President Ion Iliescu and the government [see p. 39331 for February anti-government demonstrations].

Iliescu's Middle East visit - Foreign Minister's visit to China

Iliescu, accompanied by a number of ministers, visited the United Arab Emirates, Syria and Lebanon on April 10-13.

During his tour Iliescu discussed the current situation in the Balkans, and a trade and economic co-operation agreement was signed with Syria.

Foreign Minister Teodor Viorel Melescanu visited China on April 24-28.

■ Last article p. 39378; reference article pp. R120-21.

ITALY

Referendums - Appointment of new government

Italian voters went to the polls on April 18-19 facing eight referendum questions, including several proposed constitutional changes, which were approved by large majorities in a 77 per cent turnout (84.9 in the north, 81.2 in central Italy, 64.3 per cent in the south and

64.7 per cent in Sicily and Sardinia). One key question was on modifying the proportional representation system for elections to the Senate (upper house of parliament), which was in turn expected to lead to changes in the system for elections to the Chamber of Deputies (lower house).

A joint parliamentary commission to review the 1947 Constitution had been set up in September 1992 [see p. 39114], but failed to present proposals. However, proposals for constitutional changes, sponsored by Mario Segni, a dissident Christian Democrat (DC) who subsequently left the party, were among 10 questions on which the holding of referendums was approved in January 1993 [see p. 39289]. Two of the 10 referendum questions (on ending extraordinary assistance to the *mezzogiorno*—the south—and on the direct election of mayors) were subsequently dropped following the passing of relevant legislation.

Segni, who had led the "yes" campaign, declared that the results represented "a victory for the Italian people, who, in an overwhelming majority, have today laid the foundations for a new Republic". The vote reflected extensive public disillusionment with the existing "partitocracy" which continued to be revealed as heavily corrupt and seriously compromised by involvement with the Mafia [see below].

As required by law all the referendum questions were framed in terms of the amendment of existing legislation. The percentage vote in favour, on the various issues, was as follows.

On the question on the election system for the Senate, 82.7 per cent approved the amendment of the existing system to one where 238 of the 315 elective seats were elected by majority vote and the remainder by proportional representation.

The ending of state funding of political parties was approved by 90.3 per cent; 70.1 per cent approved the abolition of the Agriculture Ministry; and 82.2 per cent approved the abolition of the Tourism Ministry (which would give the regions full responsibility in both these areas).

The repeal of a law making it a criminal offence to take drugs (which would mean that an earlier law would come into force making it an offence to possess more than a small amount of drugs) was approved by 55.3 per cent.

The ending of the central government's powers to appoint chairs of local savings banks which were fully or partly owned by local authorities was approved by 89.8 per cent; 90.1 per cent approved the abolition of the state participation ministry (already effectively dismantled); and 82.5 per cent approved the removal of environmental control questions as a responsibility of local health authorities.

Resignation of Amato government - Appointment of Ciampi

As anticipated, Giuliano Amato, who had in March been persuaded to remain until after the referendum [see p. 39386], resigned as Prime Minister on April 22.

Carlo Azeglio Ciampi was asked by President Oscar Luigi Scalfaro on April 26 to form Italy's 52nd post-war government.

Italian Cabinet

(appointed April 29)

Carlo Azeglio Ciampi (non-party) Prime Minister
 Antonio Maccanico (PRI) Cabinet Secretary
 Alfredo Diana (DC) Agriculture
 Luigi Spaventa (non-party) Budget and Planning
 Alberto Ronchey (non-party) Cultural Heritage
 Fabio Fabbri (PSI) Defence
 Augusto Barbera (PDS) Relations with Parliament
 Leopoldo Elia (DC) Electoral Reform
 Valdo Spini (PSI) European Community and Regional Affairs
 Rosa Russo Jervolino (DC) (f) Education
 Francesco Rutelli (Greens) Environment
 Vincenzo Visco (PDS) Finance
 Beniamino Andreatta (DC) Foreign Affairs
 Maria Pia Garavaglia (DC) (f) Health
 Paolo Savona (PRI) Industry and Privatization
 Nicola Mancino (DC) Interior
 Giovanni Conso (non-party) Justice
 Gino Giugni (PSI) Labour
 Paolo Baratta (PSI) Overseas Trade
 Maurizio Pagani (PSDI) Post and Telecommunications
 Francesco Merloni (DC) Public Works
 Fernanda Contri (PSI) (f) Social Affairs
 Raffaele Costa (PLI) Transport
 Piero Barrucci (DC) Treasury
 Luigi Berlinguer (PDS) Universities and Research
 Sabino Cassese (non-party) Civil Service
 Women are indicated by (f).

Ciampi, 72, had been governor of the Bank of Italy since 1979; he had established the Bank's independence from the government and had gained a reputation as "a symbol of honesty, integrity and political independence", according to the *Independent* of April 27. He was the first non-parliamentarian to be Prime Minister of Italy in the 20th century.

Ciampi's new government, announced on April 28 and sworn in on April 29, included three ministers from the renamed communist Party of Democratic Socialism (PDS), a significant development as there had been no communists in government in Italy since 1947. It also included for the first time a Green minister, as well as members of the Italian Republican Party (PRI) and the four parties of the outgoing coalition, namely the Christian Democrats, Socialists (PSI), Italian Liberal Party (PLI) and Italian Democratic Socialist Party (PSDI), and five non-party ministers. [See below, however, for withdrawal of PDS and Greens over Craxi immunity issue.]

Ciampi declared the government's "absolute priority" to be electoral reform. Economic problems would be tackled "with renewed vigour" so as to cut the deficit while strengthening and modernizing production to increase employment.

Refusal to lift Craxi's immunity

The new government was shaken after only 10 hours when the PDS and Green ministers

withdrew from the coalition following a series of votes in the Chamber of Deputies which effectively meant that Bettino Craxi, a former Prime Minister and the PSI leader until February 1993 [see p. 39337-38], who was under investigation in connection with 41 cases of corruption, remained immune from prosecution.

A request for the lifting of Craxi's immunity from prosecution, first presented on Jan. 12 [see p. 39289], had been backed by a Chamber of Deputies committee. However, in its six votes on April 29 the Chamber approved proceeding on only two lesser charges, brought by Rome magistrates, of violating legislation on party financing. Craxi's immunity was not lifted in connection with four more serious investigations by Milan magistrates for corruption and for receiving stolen property and illicit funds.

The vote provoked fighting between MPs in the Chamber and clashes between far-left and fascist demonstrators and police outside the building.

On April 30, Milan judges announced that they would take the issue to the Constitutional Court and criticized the Chamber for entering "into the evaluation of crimes, which is an exercise reserved for penal action".

Commission vote to recommend lifting of Andreotti's immunity

A Senate commission, which in hearings from April 14 onwards had heard startling allegations notably from three *pentiti* ("super-grasses"), voted on April 27 by 11 to one with 11 abstentions to recommend to the full Senate the lifting of the immunity of Giulio Andreotti, 74, who had served as a Prime Minister seven times and was a life senator.

Andreotti had been given notice on April 5 that he was under investigation for violating party financing legislation, in connection with investigations by Milan prosecutors into illegal party financing. He had already been issued cautionary warrants for involvement with the Mafia by Palermo magistrates in late March [see p. 39386].

Testimony revealed by the Senate on April 14 implied that two assassinations attributed to the Mafia had been carried out with the approval of Andreotti. Both the 1979 murder of Mino Pecorelli, a right-wing journalist [see p. 29687], and the 1982 assassination of Gen. Carlo Alberto Dalla Chiesa [see pp. 32755-56], senior Mafia investigator in Palermo, were alleged to have been carried out because both were in possession of sensitive information concerning the 1978 kidnapping and assassination of former Prime Minister Aldo Moro [see pp. 29053-55; 37785].

According to Tommaso Buscetta, a Mafia informer living under protection in the USA, Andreotti was "the politician to whom the Mafia referred before deciding any top-level assassinations". Francesco Manino Mannoia, another informer in the USA, alleged that Andreotti had met with Cosa Nostra (the Sicilian Mafia) chiefs once in Rome and in 1979 and 1980 in Palermo. These included Stefano Bontade, at the time head of the Cosa Nostra. Both Buscetta and Mannoia claimed that the March 1992 murder in Palermo of Salvatore Lima, described as Andreotti's right-hand man in Sicily [see p. 38824], was a message to Andreotti to show the Mafia's

dissatisfaction over his unwillingness to comply with its wishes.

Furthermore, on April 20 Baldassare Di Maggio, the driver of Salvatore Riina who had been arrested on the basis of Di Maggio's evidence in January 1993 [see p. 39289], maintained that Andreotti, in company with Lima, had met Riina and other Mafia leaders in Palermo early in September 1988 and had kissed Riina on meeting him in what Di Maggio presumed was a "sign of respect".

Andreotti vigorously denied these allegations. *La Stampa* of April 13 reported him as saying: "Bring me proof, a single proof of my links to the Mafia—a single act or contact to make the accusations credible." On April 15 he declared: "I have been the victim of shameless lies." Di Maggio's allegations he described as "very serious slander".

Other corruption investigations

On April 5 Arnaldo Forlani, who served as Prime Minister briefly in 1980-81 and was DC party leader from February 1989 until October 1992, was given notice that he was under investigation for abuse of party financing laws and the alleged payment of a 1,200 million lire bribe on a road construction contract near Florence.

Magistrates requested on April 8 and 9 the lifting of the parliamentary immunity of 15 senior politicians accused of links with the Camorra (Neapolitan Mafia). These included Riccardo Misasi, a former Education Minister, Antonio Gava, a former Interior Minister (whose responsibilities had included combating the Mafia) who was alleged by judges to be "a part of—not just an ally of—the Camorra criminal structure", and Paolo Cirino Pomicino, a former Budget Minister.

Industrial action

On April 2 the three main trade union federations staged a staggered four-hour general strike, pressing the government to combat rising unemployment which was approaching 11 per cent. Demonstrations were held in major cities; the largest, involving 70,000 people, was in Milan, while in Naples and Turin there were clashes between fascist and extreme left-wing elements. [For October 1992 strike see p. 39162.]

Pressure on the lira brought its value to more than 1,000 to the deutsche mark although it ended the day at 998 to the mark.

Death of Guido Carli

Guido Carli, governor of the Bank of Italy in 1960-75, president of Confindustria (the industrialists' association) in 1975-80, and Treasury Minister in 1989-92, died on April 23 at the age of 79.

■ Last article pp. 39386-87; reference article pp. R113-14.

SPAIN

Calling of June general election

Prime Minister Felipe González, facing an economic downturn, a corruption scandal and left-wing opposition from within the ruling

Socialist Workers' Party (PSOE), announced on April 12 that the general election would be held on June 6 instead of in the autumn as scheduled. The decision was seen as a calculated move by González to unite the crisis-ridden PSOE, which was currently running neck-and-neck in the latest opinion polls with the conservative Popular Party (PP).

In an effort to boost the party's electoral appeal, but at the expense of further internal PSOE criticism, González stated on April 26 that respected independent figures in public life would be invited to seek election on PSOE lists. Most controversially, the country's best known judge, Baltasar Garzón, 37, celebrated for the prison sentences which he had passed in cases involving drug trafficking, terrorism offences and police corruption, was invited to stand with González in the capital, Madrid.

Internal PSOE dispute

The election announcement followed a PSOE executive committee meeting on April 10 which ended in a stand-off between González, the PSOE secretary-general, supported by conservative Cabinet members, and the PSOE deputy secretary-general Alfonso Guerra, a former Deputy Prime Minister, who was leader of the left wing and in control of the party apparatus.

In a compromise agreement González was given wider powers over the running of the election campaign in return for withdrawing his threat to step down unless a senior party official took responsibility and resigned over serious charges of party corruption.

The corruption allegations had been substantiated in a report on PSOE finances, submitted by government auditors to the Supreme Court on March 26. The report confirmed that two senior PSOE politicians had used the Barcelona-based front companies, Filesa and Time Export, to channel tax-free into party funds an estimated US\$8,500,000 from sympathetic banks and corporations in return for fictitious consultancy reports. Several of these "donors" reportedly won government contracts [see p. 38300].

José María "Txiki" Benegas, the PSOE organizational secretary [not, as wrongly given on p. R123, secretary-general] who was third in the party hierarchy and an ally of Guerra, had made public a letter to González on March 29, in which he indicated his willingness to resign but counterbalanced this offer with a pointed attack, thereby making his letter an effective declaration of war by the party on the government. Benegas accused ministers of breaching traditions of party loyalty and solidarity, and of seeking to topple him by blaming him for the Filesa scandal.

Former PSOE financial and administrative secretary Guillermo Galeote, suspended over the Filesa affair in June 1991, had his resignation confirmed at the PSOE executive meeting [ibid.].

Currency crisis

Massive speculation on April 23 drove the peseta down to a historic low of Ptas 74.35 to the deutsche mark (its central rate in the exchange-rate mechanism of the European Monetary System being Ptas 72.79) following its second devaluation in November 1992

[see p. 39206], despite a call by the Bank of Spain for six European central banks (those of Germany, Belgium, France, Holland, Denmark and Ireland) to defend the peseta.

The crisis was attributed in part to press comments by González rejecting the possibility of a coalition government in the event of an inconclusive election. Although the German Bundesbank had cut interest rates on April 22, the Bank of Spain, in an effort to defend the peseta, had on the same day been compelled to raise short-term rates by a percentage point, to 15 per cent.

New President of Canaries

A new President of the Canary Islands, the nationalist Manuel Hermoso Rojas, was inaugurated on April 6.

Hermoso's Canaries Independent Group (AIC) had been part of the former PSOE-led governing coalition but withdrew on March 14 in protest over the terms of the Economic Law negotiated with the Madrid government, complaining that it failed to address the Islands' urgent development needs. Hermoso then received support from three opposition parties, grouped together as the Canaries Coalition (CC), to defeat PSOE incumbent Jerónimo Saavedra in a censure motion on March 31. The opposition commanded the 31 votes necessary in the 60-member parliament, to 23 for the PSOE; the six PP deputies abstained.

In his inaugural speech on April 6 Hermoso promised to devolve power from the centre to town and city councils by January 1994, and to create a local television station and autonomous police force. Critics argued that such pledges belied his statement of April 1 that his government would eschew measures distancing it from the Madrid government and would maintain strong links with the Spanish state.

Hermoso's coalition government lost its slim overall majority when a deputy resigned on April 19 from Canary Initiative (ICAN), one of the coalition parties.

Deaths of GRAPO members

Three members of the left-wing First of October Anti-Fascist Resistance Groups (GRAPO) were killed on the night of April 7-8 in the city of Zaragoza by the explosion of a bomb which they had detonated in the attempted robbery of an armoured goods wagon carrying 50,000,000 pesetas; a guard was also killed. Two guerrillas escaped empty-handed and two more were seriously wounded. Police later identified the bodies of GRAPO leaders Pedro Luis Cuadrado Delabat and Isabel Santamaría del Pino but were uncertain whether the third was that of the GRAPO head and husband of del Pino, Fernando Silva Sande.

Death of King's father

Don Juan de Borbón y Battenberg, 79, Count of Barcelona and father of King Juan Carlos, died in a Pamplona clinic on April 1 from throat cancer.

Although Don Juan was the son of King Alfonso XIII of Spain (who was deposed in 1931 in favour of the Second Republic), the Law of Succession passed in 1969 by the Franco regime [see p. 23473]

had provided that he should not become King after Franco's death and that the succession should pass instead to Juan Carlos. Exiled from Spain for 40 years, he became a fierce critic of Franco and campaigned for democracy and for the restoration of the monarchy.

■ Last article p. 39385; reference article pp. R123-24.

FRANCE

New Speaker - Government programme

On April 2, following the centre-right general election victory in March [see pp. 39381-83], Philippe Séguin of the Gaullist Rally for the Republic (RPR) was elected President (Speaker) of the National Assembly in place of Henri Emmanuelli.

Séguin was elected in a second round of voting after the withdrawal of his chief opponent, Dominique Baudis of the Centre of Social Democrats (CDS) for the Union for French Democracy (UDF). Séguin had been Minister for Employment and Social Affairs in 1986-88 and had campaigned against ratification of the Maastricht Treaty in the referendum held in September 1992 [see pp. 39081-82].

In a speech to the National Assembly on April 8 Prime Minister Edouard Balladur declared that "to improve our economy, the first requirement is quite naturally the strength and stability of our currency". Expenditure savings of F 20,000 million were to be sought in 1993, while a privatization programme would contribute to a reduction of the budget deficit from an expected F 330,000 million in 1993 (representing 3.4 per cent of national output) to below 2.5 per cent by 1997. Combating unemployment was an "absolute priority". On the question of the GATT agreement reached by the EC and the USA in November 1992 [see pp. 39176-77] Balladur demanded discussions not only on agriculture but also on the other issues. (US\$1.00=F 5.4377 as at April 8, 1993.)

As expected Balladur won a comfortable majority in the vote of confidence which followed his speech. [For reductions in European currency interest rates during April and meeting with Kohl see p. 39434.]

Police killings

In the first week of April, in separate incidents, police shot dead three youths, prompting clashes between police and protesters in Paris and Tourcoing (near Lille).

A 17-year-old Zaïrean was shot dead in a Paris police station during interrogation, and two 18-year-old immigrants of north African extraction were shot in Chambéry (Savoy) and Watterlos (near Lille) respectively, as they were arrested for petty crimes. In a fourth incident a drug-addict of Moroccan extraction was found dead in a police cell in Arcachon (near Bordeaux) with a ruptured spleen, broken ribs and a punctured lung.

Minister of State for the Interior Charles Pasqua on April 9 apologised to the families of the three

youths, saying that he would be "merciless" to those responsible. On April 27 he said that he would be presenting legislation reforming the law on "preventive" identity checks, and giving the police new powers to combat crimes linked to drugs and illegal immigration.

PS leadership change

At an acrimonious meeting on April 3 the executive board of the Socialist Party (PS) approved the creation of a provisional committee headed by former Prime Minister Michel Rocard to lead the party until a congress in July.

Rocard, who had called during the election campaign for a "political big bang" to regenerate the left [see p. 39381], was one of several prominent PS members who had lost their seats in the Assembly.

Laurent Fabius, another former Prime Minister and since January 1992 the PS first secretary [see pp. 38735-36], was in effect made a scapegoat for the party's comprehensive defeat. Jean-Pierre Chevènement, a former Defence Minister who had founded a Citizens' Movement (*Mouvement des citoyens*) in August 1992, resigned from the PS on April 4.

Corruption charge against Michel Noir

On April 8 Michel Noir, mayor of Lyon, was charged with receiving illicit funds in connection with a scandal concerning his son-in-law and former campaign manager, Pierre Botton [see also p. 38020]. Botton had been detained since November 1992 and was charged with large-scale fraud.

■ Last article pp. 39381-83; reference article pp. R107-08.

GERMANY

Ruling on use of German forces over Bosnia

On April 8 the Constitutional Court (*Bundesverfassungsgericht*—BVG) ruled that German forces could participate in AWACS (advance warning and control systems) flights to enforce the no-fly zone over Bosnia (approved by the UN Security Council on March 31—see p. 39375). The ruling, by five votes to three, allowed for the first use of German combat troops outside the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) area of operations since the Second World War. It effectively supported the position of Chancellor Helmut Kohl and Defence Minister Volker Rühe that Germany's credibility as a reliable NATO member and its international standing would be seriously damaged if it did not participate.

The question had threatened to split the ruling coalition of Christian Democrats (CDU and CSU) and Free Democrats (FDP). However, the three parties had agreed on March 24 that at a Cabinet meeting on April 2 the CDU and CSU would approve the use of German troops to enforce the no-fly zone, while the FDP would vote against this and would appeal to the BVG for a ruling on

constitutionality (as did the opposition Social Democrats—SPD).

The ruling did not resolve the wider issue of the use of German troops and in particular the interpretation of Article 24 of the Basic Law (constitution) on "mutual entry into a collective security system" which had in the past been interpreted as excluding the use of German troops outside the NATO area. [For proposed constitutional changes on this issue which would require a two-thirds parliamentary majority see p. 39288.]

Decision to send troops to Somalia

The BVG ruling opened the way for a Cabinet decision on April 21 to send 1,600 German troops to assist the UN relief effort in Somalia in June, as requested by UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali [see also p. 39356].

On this occasion the FDP approved the move on the grounds that the UN had said that German soldiers would not be sent on combat duty but would be protecting humanitarian workers. The SPD decided not to take the matter to the BVG. The move represented the second use of German "blue berets" under UN auspices (a medical team having been sent under UN auspices to Cambodia; the AWACS flights over Bosnia were under NATO rather than UN command).

Ballot on steelworkers' strike

In ballots held between April 26 and 28, between 85 and 90 per cent of eastern German steel, electrical and metal workers voted in favour of industrial action from May 3. The action was in support of a claim for a 26 per cent pay rise to bring eastern pay levels up to those in western Germany by 1994, as provided for in a March 1991 agreement between IG Metall, the steel, electrical and metal workers' union, and the Gesamtmetall employers' association [see p. 38476].

Over the preceding month protests and warning strikes took place. These included marches in Bonn by between 70,000 and 100,000 protesters on March 26, warning strikes beginning on April 1 by eastern Germany's 300,000 electrical and metal industry employees, and marches on April 24-25 by more than 200,000 metal workers in Leipzig, Cologne, Potsdam, Stuttgart, Hamburg and Dortmund. [For public-sector pay agreement in February see p. 39336; on Feb. 23 agreement was reached in the eastern German chemical industry for pay increases of 9 per cent.]

Honecker trial

On April 7 the Berlin regional tribunal definitively suspended the manslaughter charges against former East German communist leader Erich Honecker, who had been released on health grounds and had left for Chile in January 1993 [see p. 39288].

Relations with Russia

On April 13 Defence Minister Rühe and his Russian counterpart, Marshal Pavel Grachev, signed a defence co-operation agreement providing for information and personnel exchanges, training in Germany for Russian armed forces personnel, and visits to Russia

by members of the *Bundeswehr* (German armed forces).

Kohl had met Russian President Boris Yeltsin in Moscow on March 3 (on his return from a visit to Japan—see p. 39336).

■ Last article p. 39384; reference article pp. R109-10.

UNITED KINGDOM

Major's statement on economic recovery

UK Prime Minister John Major asserted on April 22 that "we are beginning now to see the [economic] recovery" and that "things are certainly getting quite sharply better". The same day the monthly unemployment figures for March showed an unexpected fall of 26,000 to a seasonally adjusted total of 2,940,800, following a similar fall in February. The British Chamber of Commerce reported that business confidence was at its highest level for four years and that companies were seeing rising orders. The pound rose to its highest rate since mid-January and closed on April 22 at DM 2.4868. [For German cut in interest rates on April 22 see p. 39434.]

One-day protest strikes

Mining and rail workers and some London bus workers staged a one-day strike on April 2 as part of the European Trade Union Confederation's day of action against unemployment, affecting the national rail network, 38 out of 50 pits and some London bus services. A similar one-day strike took place on April 16 in protest at pit closures [see pp. 39383; 39245; 39159] and against the compulsory redundancies which would result from the controversial planned privatization of British Rail [see p. 39207]. [For industrial action in Italy on April 2 see p. 39431.]

■ Last article p. 39383; reference article pp. R127-28.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Proposal to restart talks

On April 7 during a visit to Northern Ireland the United Kingdom Prime Minister John Major announced that the UK government would present its own proposals to restart political talks which had stalled in November 1992 [see p. 39207].

Details of the proposals were not expected until after local elections on May 19. Major said that "we want talks to start as soon as possible" and that this represented "the only credible, logical, sane and safe way forward", adding: "I think many people underestimate the progress that has actually been made in the talks." His initiative nevertheless apparently marked a departure from the UK government's previous stance as "honest broker" in talks between parties.

On April 16 Albert Reynolds paid his first visit to Northern Ireland since taking office as Irish Prime Minister in February 1992 [see pp. 38779-80].

Meeting involving IRA - Talks between SDLP and Sinn Féin leaders

On April 7, in a controversial personal initiative, the Irish senator Gordon Wilson (a member of the Irish Senate although from Northern Ireland), whose daughter was killed in the 1987 Enniskillen bombing [see p. 36237], met with representatives of the Irish Republican Army (IRA), who apologized for his daughter's death but said that they were not responsible for the conflict over Northern Ireland. Wilson said afterwards: "I got nothing and in that sense perhaps I was duped."

On April 10 John Hume, leader of the (largely Catholic) Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP), held discussions with Gerry Adams, leader of *Sinn Féin*, the political wing of the Irish republican movement. [For talks between the two parties which broke down in September 1988 see p. 36239.]

City of London bomb

A bomb exploded at 10.25 a.m. on April 24 near Bishopsgate in the City of London, killing one person and injuring more than 40 others, and causing damage initially estimated at £1,000 million.

The bomb, placed in a truck, was estimated to have contained 10 pounds of semtex and a tonne of chemical fertilizer. The IRA subsequently claimed responsibility, as it had for a similar bombing in the City in April 1992 [see p. 38869].

■ Last article pp. 39383-84; reference article p. R128.

SWEDEN

Austerity measures

On April 22 the government presented a revised finance bill providing for further savings of SKr 81,000 million (US\$11,000 million) in 1994-98. Despite these cuts the budget deficit was expected to be SKr 191,200 million in the financial year beginning on July 1, representing 12.9 per cent of gross national product (GNP) and SKr 28,900 million more than predicted when the 1993/94 budget was presented in January [see p. 39287].

Savings of SKr 66,000 million would come from freezing public consumption, reducing benefits and reforming pensions; revenue was to increase by SKr 15,000 million through more effective tax collection, a broadening of the base for value added tax and other taxation measures. Gross domestic product (GDP) was now expected to fall by 1.7 per cent in 1993/94 but to increase by 1.2 per cent the following year.

On April 2 the minority government had won parliamentary approval for cuts in unemployment benefit from 90 to 80 per cent of earnings.

Earlier, on March 17, the government won a parliamentary vote of confidence for its econ-

omic and social policy when the populist New Democracy abstained rather than voting with the opposition Social Democrats and Left Party (former communists). New Democracy had voted against two government bills (including the 1993/94 budget) on March 10 in an attempt to win greater influence over the centre-right coalition's economic policy.

■ Last article p. 39334; reference article pp. R124-25.

CYPRUS

Tension over shooting incidents

With a new round of UN-mediated Cyprus talks due to start on May 24, two incidents in particular contributed to heightened tension in April.

A Greek Cypriot soldier was shot dead by a Turkish sentry in the buffer zone in Nicosia on April 8, apparently as he was engaged in the contraband but common practice of buying local alcoholic drink on the Turkish Cypriot side.

A Greek Cypriot naval vessel opened fire on a Turkish freighter on April 28, wounding the captain and a crew member. The Turkish Cypriot side, condemning what it described as "piracy", rejected claims that the freighter had been inside Cypriot 12-mile territorial waters between Limassol and Larnaca, that it had been sailing without a flag, and that it had declined to stop when challenged.

■ Last article p. 39387; reference article p. R104.

TURKEY

Death of Özal - Succession struggle

President Turgut Özal, 66, died in Ankara following a heart attack on April 17. The Speaker of the Grand National Assembly, Hüsamettin Cindoruk, was appointed to take over as acting President until a new President was elected; elections were constitutionally required within 40 days. A 10-day nomination period started on April 28.

Özal, Turkey's eighth President, was originally an electrical engineer from a modest family in central Anatolia. He had formed the Motherland Party (ANAP) in 1983, uniting several right-wing groups, and was elected that year as Prime Minister, a post which he relinquished to assume the presidency in 1989 [see p. 36985]. Criticized for disregarding constitutional restrictions on what was intended to be the largely ceremonial post of president, he was nevertheless credited with laying the foundations of Turkey's free-market economy and with enhancing its role as a regional power enjoying close relations with the West.

Succession struggle

Speculation about Özal's successor began almost immediately, with Prime Minister Süleyman Demirel and Speaker Cindoruk ex-

pressing an early interest in contesting presidential elections. Other potential contenders included Deputy Prime Minister Erdal İnönü, leader of the Social Democratic Populist Party (SHP), a junior partner in the governing coalition.

On April 23 Demirel was formally nominated as the presidential candidate of the conservative True Path Party (DYP). Observers noted that his candidacy could threaten the ruling DYP-SHP coalition, since Demirel could not rely on SHP backing.

Extension of PKK ceasefire

The leader of the Kurdish Workers' Party (PKK), Abdullah Öcalan on April 16 declared an indefinite extension of the ceasefire announced in March [see p. 39387]. The decision followed talks in mid-April between Öcalan and the Iraqi Kurdish leader Jalal Talabani, head of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), who had earlier met with both Özal and Demirel.

Responding to this announcement on April 16, Demirel reiterated that "the sovereignty of the Turkish Republic cannot be negotiated in any way".

A leading member of the pro-Kurdish People's Labour Party (HEP), Sehydavut Yalcinkaya, was killed on April 10 by unknown gunmen in Kiziltepe, near the border with Syria.

Renewed left-wing offensive

The extreme left-wing Turkish Revolutionary Communist Union (TİKB) claimed responsibility for the killing in Adana of state prosecutor Ethem Ekin on April 20.

Restrictions on private broadcasting

The government ordered 50 local private television stations to cease operations by April 1, saying that they interfered with vital air traffic and police communications. Critics alleged that the move was an attempt to restrict media access by Kurdish separatists and Islamic radicals.

Controversy over increase in government shares

A controversial decision by the government in early April to increase its stake to 40 per cent in one of the country's most profitable private retail institutions, the *Türkiye İş Bankası*, faced legal action by the opposition Republican People's Party (CHP). Until recently the CHP had held control of the *İş Bankası*, having been bequeathed its share by its leader and founder of the bank, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. At the bank's annual meeting in early April the CHP's shareholding had been reduced to only 1.92 per cent.

Rise in GNP and foreign debt

Gross national product (GNP) grew by 5.9 per cent and gross domestic product (GDP) by 5.5 per cent in 1992, according to figures released in mid-April by the State Institute of Statistics.

The government had targeted growth of around 5 per cent in 1993.

Foreign debt in 1992 increased by 8.3 per cent to US\$54,700 million compared with US\$50,400 million in 1991, according to figures released by the Finance Ministry on April 14.

Foreign relations

President Özal visited Uzbekistan, Kirgizstan, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan on April 4-12, travelling on to Azerbaijan on April 13-15 [see p. 39424].

Foreign Affairs Minister Hikmet Cetin met his Greek counterpart Michalis Papaconstantinou in Ankara on April 19, telling a press conference afterwards that the two sides had agreed on the need for peace in the Balkans but differed on "means and methods for a solution".

■ Last article p. 39387; reference article pp. R125-26.

EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

German and French interest rate cuts

During April both the French and German central banks made further cuts in interest rates, reflecting a reduction in pressure on the franc within the exchange rate mechanism (ERM) of the European Communities (EC). [For earlier interest rate cuts see pp. 39290; 39339; 39388.]

In France, where the new government made a policy statement on April 8 [see p. 39432], interest rates were cut on four occasions. On April 13 the Bank of France reduced the 5-10-day repurchase rate, the main short-term lending facility, from 12 per cent to 10 per cent (the rate prior to January—see p. 39290). In successive steps on April 19, 23 and 29 the official intervention rate was reduced from 9.1 to 8.25 per cent and the 5-10-day repurchase rate to 9.25 per cent.

In Germany, the Bundesbank announced on April 22 a cut in the discount rate from 7.5 per cent [see p. 39388] to 7.25 per cent and in the Lombard rate from 9 to 8.5 per cent. In succeeding days Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and Sweden also lowered their key interest rates.

[For pressure on lira because of Italian institutional crisis see p. 39431; for pressure on peseta, resulting in eventual devaluation of peseta and escudo, see p. 39431 and May News Digest.]

Kohl-Balladur meeting

In his first foreign visit as French Prime Minister Edouard Balladur had talks with German Chancellor Helmut Kohl in Bonn on April 22 (coinciding with the German interest rate cut), focusing on European union, the state of GATT trade talks and the forthcoming Group of Seven summit in Tokyo [see p. 39441].

Growth plan

EC Finance Ministers meeting in Luxembourg on April 19 approved detailed measures

designed to stimulate EC overall growth by 0.6 per cent [see p. 39244 for measures first agreed at Edinburgh in December 1992], which, it was hoped, would create 450,000 extra jobs over the next two years. The European Trade Union Confederation had organized protests throughout the EC on April 2 over the failure to combat unemployment [see also pp. 39431; 39433].

Ban on central European meat and dairy imports

On April 8 the EC imposed a one-month ban on imports of animals, meat and dairy products from central and eastern European countries, after the discovery in Italy of animals with foot and mouth disease which had been imported from Croatia without proper papers.

Hungary and Poland retaliated with similar bans the following day, as did Bulgaria and the Czech and Slovak Republics in subsequent days.

The EC Commission decided on April 21 to lift the ban on imports from countries which accepted tighter controls on exports, including a 14-day quarantine period and blood tests. On April 28 the ban was lifted for Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia, which had all accepted the EC's terms.

Negotiations on Norwegian membership

On April 5 negotiations opened on Norway's application for EC membership. Negotiations with Austria, Finland and Sweden had begun in February [see p. 38340].

On March 24 the Commission had issued a positive Opinion on Norway's November 1992 application [see p. 39206]. Norway's membership of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the Western European Union would ease negotiations on security issues (in contrast to those with the other three European Free Trade Association (EFTA) applicant countries). Differences in the structure of Norway's agriculture, fisheries, regional, competition and petroleum policies were more problematic.

Co-operation agreement with Slovenia

On April 5, EC officials signed a trade and economic co-operation agreement with Slovenia, the first with a former Yugoslav state, and similar in form to those signed in May 1992 with Albania and the Baltic states [see p. 38931].

■ Last article pp. 39387-88; reference article pp. R130-32.

EBRD

Annual meeting

The second annual meeting of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) was held in London on April 26-27 [for 1992 annual meeting see p. 38882]. Proceedings were overshadowed by revelations

about the level of operating expenditure compared with loans and investments made in central and eastern Europe.

The *Financial Times* of April 13 reported that from April 1991 until the end of 1992 the EBRD had disbursed only £101 million in loans and investments but had spent £202,500,000 on furnishing and equipping offices, paying staff, travel and administrative overheads. Fitting out the Bank's London headquarters had cost £55,500,000 (including £750,000 to replace marble in the foyer) plus a further £18,000,000 spent on the bank's first temporary offices. £600,000 was spent on hiring private jets.

The extent of press criticism and the poor image which this created led Theo Waigel, chair of the EBRD board of governors and German Finance Minister, to upbraid EBRD President, Jacques Attali, while the 23 directors agreed at a board meeting on April 19 to tighten budgetary procedures.

According to the annual report the Bank approved 54 investment projects during the year, providing for a total EBRD contribution of ECU 1,200 million; actual disbursements totalled ECU 126 million (ECU 1=US\$1.2379 as at April 30, 1993).

On April 22 it was revealed that Don McCutchan, Canadian executive director at the EBRD, was returning to Canada. He had been the only member of the executive board to vote against a 40 per cent increase in the bank's operating budget and had acquired a reputation as "a thorn in Mr Attali's side", according to the *Independent* of April 22.

■ Last article p. 38882; reference article p. R130.

EUROPE

European co-operation conference

On April 13-14 the Danish government hosted a conference in Copenhagen on "the perspectives for developing European co-operation". A follow-up conference was to be held in France in the autumn.

The conference was attended by representatives from 30 countries (all 12 European Community (EC) and seven European Free Trade Association (EFTA) countries, together with 11 east and central European states—Albania, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia), the EC Commission, the European Investment Bank and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD).

The concluding declaration recognized that the EC and EFTA had an important role to play in opening markets progressively "on a mutually advantageous basis". However, eastern European states were critical of the EC's failure to open up markets for sensitive goods and in particular of the EC's imposition on April 8 of a one-month ban on imports of meat and dairy products from eastern Europe [see p. 39434].

Sir Leon Brittan, EC Commissioner for External Economic Affairs and Trade, said that there was "unjustified alarmism" on the part of EC member governments as regards opening markets in sensitive sectors (steel, textiles, fertilizers, agricultural products). EC countries, he said, had benefited so far from the reorientation of eastern European trade, increasing their exports in eastern Europe by 20 per cent in 1992 and running a trade surplus of US\$1,300 million vis-à-vis the Visegrad Four (Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia) and Bulgaria, whose exports to the EC had increased by only 11 per cent.

■ Last article p. 39388; regional organizations reference articles pp. R130-33.

IN BRIEF

DENMARK: The coalition government of the Faroe Islands of the Social Democrats and the People's Party (in office since the November 1990 elections—see p. 37868) resigned on April 22 over fisheries policy; it was replaced by a coalition of Social Democrats, the Republican Party and the Home Rule Party. Marita Petersen, who had replaced Atli Dam as Prime Minister in February 1992, remained Prime Minister.

EFTA: On April 19 the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) concluded free trade agreements with the Czech and Slovak Republics similar to the agreement concluded with the former Czechoslovakia in March 1992 [see pp. 38834-35].

ESTONIA: On April 8 the *Riigikogu* (parliament) adopted a housing privatization bill based on the distribution of vouchers for the purchase of state-owned property except to those who had worked professionally in the Soviet armed forces, the Estonian Communist Party or the KGB; the government dismissed opposition claims that parliament had placed itself above the Constitution by disqualifying sections of the population.

FINLAND: On April 15 Paavo Väyrynen, 46, announced that he would resign as Minister for Foreign Affairs, having the previous week been designated the candidate of the Centre Party (KESK—the leading party in the ruling four party coalition) in the 1994 presidential elections; he was succeeded on May 4 by Heikki Haavisto, who was known for his criticism of EC membership on which negotiations had opened in February [see p. 39340].

LITHUANIA: Following the decision of the *Seimas* on April 15 to dissolve Vilnius city council and to introduce direct rule pending municipal elections, the council successfully appealed to President Algirdas Brazauskas to intervene on its behalf; on April 20 he announced that the dissolution would be postponed pending an appeal to the Constitutional Court.

NORWAY: Defence Minister Johan Joergen Holst was on April 2 chosen as Foreign Affairs Minister in place of Thorvald Stoltenberg, who was to succeed Cyrus Vance as UN co-chair of the peace negotiations on Yugoslavia; the Defence portfolio went to Joergen Kosmo.

MIDDLE EAST - ARAB WORLD

MIDDLE EAST

Resumption of peace talks

The ninth round of Middle East peace talks opened in Washington, one week later than scheduled, on April 27—the first session to take place since the inauguration of US President Bill Clinton.

The eighth round of talks had ended in December 1992 when the Arab delegations withdrew in protest at Israel's decision to deport more than 400 Palestinians to Lebanon [see p. 39224].

Palestinian decision to attend

The Palestinian leadership, which had generally opposed the reopening of Middle East peace negotiations, finally agreed to attend the ninth round after weeks of concerted Arab pressure.

The Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) leadership convened in Tunis in early April, but refused to make a formal decision on attendance at the ninth round. Foreign ministers and high-ranking officials of the Arab states involved in the negotiations convened in Damascus (the Syrian capital) on April 16-17, in an attempt to forge a united Arab front ahead of the scheduled opening of the ninth round on April 20. Instead, the Arabs were forced to call for a delay in the resumption of talks until April 27.

Talks between the Arab parties resumed in Damascus on April 20-21. By the end of this Damascus meeting, Palestinians opposed to the resumption of negotiations had reluctantly responded to pressure from PLO chair Yassir Arafat, backed by Syrian, Jordanian, Lebanese and Egyptian officials, to attend the ninth round in order to prevent the whole peace process from collapsing.

It was reported that Saudi Arabia had offered the PLO substantial funding on condition that it attend the talks. Saudi funding for Palestinian institutions, including the UN Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), had been largely halted in the aftermath of the Gulf War.

Protests by Palestinian deportees and Palestinian factions

Two of the Palestinian negotiating team (both members of the Palestinian People's Party) "suspended" their participation in protest at the Arab decision to attend the talks despite Israel's refusal to comply fully with UN Resolution 799.

Resolution 799 called on Israel to allow the return of all the Palestinians deported to Lebanon in December 1992. In February the Israeli government had offered to allow back immediately 101 of the 396 deportees who remained stranded in Lebanon; the remaining 295 would be allowed back by the end of 1993 [see p. 39340]. This offer had been rejected by the Palestinian leadership.

The decision to attend the talks was also opposed by the Palestinian deportees, most of

whom were members of *Hamas* and Islamic *Jihad*.

The deportees staged protest marches on April 16 and 26 from their camp in Marj al-Zuhur, on the edge of Israel's self-declared "security zone" in Lebanon, toward the Zummarayya crossing point.

Hamas also opposed the decision to attend the ninth round, as did the so-called "10 Palestinian factions", headed by the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) and the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP). *Hamas* and the "10 factions" called strikes in the occupied territories in late April in protest at the opening of the ninth round.

Israeli concessions

The Palestinian decision to attend the talks was facilitated by a number of Israeli concessions.

On April 11 Israel announced a major concession when it approved the inclusion of Faisal Husseini, head of the Palestinian delegation, as a member of the negotiating team for the ninth round. Israel had previously refused Husseini permission to be a part of the team because he was a resident of East Jerusalem. Since the start of the talks in 1991, Israel had refused to enter into discussions with any Palestinians from East Jerusalem for fear that such a move might indicate flexibility over the status of the Israeli-annexed Arab section of the city.

Another Israeli concession was announced on April 28 (the day after the ninth round resumed in Washington) when it was agreed that Israel would allow the return of 30 veteran deportees, all forcibly exiled during the 1967-87 period. This announcement was described by Palestinian spokesperson Hanan Ashrawi as a "first instalment". The 30, most of whom had lived in Jordan since their expulsion, included prominent figures such as Ruhi Khatib, a former mayor of Jerusalem, and Hanna Nasser, a former president of Bir Zeit University. The majority were members of *al-Fatah*, Arafat's mainstream PLO organization. Analysts believed that the move was partly aimed at bolstering *al-Fatah*'s standing with the Palestinian negotiators in the territories.

The *Middle East International* of April 30 listed other concessions and incentives (parts of a so-called "assurance package") reportedly offered to the Palestinians on condition that they attended the talks. The package included an Israeli commitment not to resort to deportations again, and reaffirmation by Israel and the USA of UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 as the terms of reference of the Middle East peace negotiations.

Mubarak's talks with Clinton and Rabin

Further impetus for the resumption of talks was provided by Egyptian President Mohammed Hosni Mubarak, who held dis-

cussions with all the major parties during April.

On April 6, after visiting Germany, France and the United Kingdom, Mubarak met with Clinton and US Secretary of State Warren Christopher in Washington. Mubarak and other Arab leaders welcomed Clinton's assertion that the USA was prepared to play the role of an active "full partner" in the peace negotiations. However, Clinton also informed Mubarak that he was not prepared to press Israel into agreeing to further "compromise" proposals in order to ensure Palestinian representation at the peace talks.

On April 14 Mubarak held a round of talks with Israeli Prime Minister Itzhak Rabin in the Egyptian city of Ismailiya. Before his meeting with Rabin, Mubarak consulted with Arafat and Husseini.

Opening of ninth round

The "four tracks" of Middle East peace negotiations formally restarted in Washington on April 27. At the start of the talks, Secretary of State Christopher met with the heads of all the participating delegations, the first time such a meeting had taken place. Jordan radio reported on April 27 that Christopher had told the delegations that it was "high time to set aside procedural issues and get down to the core and substance of the Arab-Israeli conflict".

Multilateral talks

Meetings of the water sharing and economic co-operation committees of the multilateral strand of the Middle East peace talks were held in Geneva and Rome in late April.

"Closure" of occupied territories

A special session of the Israeli Cabinet on April 11 agreed to the indefinite "closure" of the occupied territories. This decision, first taken in late March after a serious escalation of violence in Israel and the territories [see p. 39389], would be reviewed on a weekly basis. The decision was regarded as an important move towards disengagement and total separation of Israel from the occupied territories.

The closure of the territories had cut off an estimated 120,000 Palestinians from their jobs in Israel, mostly as low-paid menial construction and agricultural labourers. Permits were issued during April to allow some Palestinians into Israel to work. However, the government established a special committee in early April to study ideas on how to replace such labourers with Israelis.

Following the closure of the territories, Israeli security forces in early April launched large-scale search and arrest operations, especially in the Gaza Strip. The *Guardian* of April 3, citing "military commentators in the Israeli press", reported that the security forces had captured at least 10 leading Palestinian militants and uncovered substantial amounts of arms and munitions.

The closure of the territories led to a reduction in violence, although the Gaza Strip remained tense and fighting between Palestinian youths and Israeli troops continued.

An Israeli lawyer who served as a consultant for the European Communities in the occupied territories, was hacked to death by members of the Red Eagles group (the military wing of the DFLP) in Gaza City on April 18. Two Palestinians, including a mother of six, died and some 30 others were injured during unrest in Nusayrat camp, Gaza, on April 21. A Palestinian youth was killed during unrest in the Gaza camp of Khan Yunis on April 26. Two days later three Palestinians, including a 12-year-old boy, were killed during unrest in the Gaza Strip.

■ Last article pp. 39389-90.

PALESTINIAN AFFAIRS

Upgrading of PLO office in Luxembourg

On April 10 Luxembourg upgraded the status of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) office there to the grade of general commission [see p. 39389 for Belgian decision in March to upgrade the PLO office]. The decision was welcomed by the PLO, which expressed its eagerness to strengthen its relations with all European countries.

US indictment of Fatah members

The US Justice Department announced on April 1 that four members of the Revolutionary Council of *Fatah* (RCF—the Abu Nidal Group) had been indicted by a federal grand jury in St Louis, Missouri, on criminal racketeering charges which included plotting to commit terrorist acts and murder Jews. The four were named as Tawfiq Musa of Milwaukee and Zein Isa, Saif Nijmeh and Luie Nijmeh, all from St Louis.

■ Last article pp. 39211-12; reference article p. R143.

LEBANON

Fighting in southern Lebanon

Sporadic and sometimes fierce fighting took place in southern Lebanon during April between *Hezbollah* guerrillas and Israeli and South Lebanon Army (SLA) forces [see p. 39341 for details of fighting in February].

The two sides clashed on April 4-5 as *Hezbollah* fired Katyusha rockets into northern Israel and Israel responded with helicopter attacks on a *Hezbollah*-controlled village on the tip of Israel's self-declared "security zone".

On April 13 three Israeli soldiers were killed and two others wounded in a bomb attack near the village of Qantara on the edge of the security zone. *Hezbollah* claimed responsibility for the attack, its most potent since October 1992 when five Israeli soldiers died in a bomb attack [see p. 39166]. Israel laun-

ched retaliatory missile attacks on *Hezbollah* positions, but no casualties were reported.

Two SLA fighters were abducted on April 20 by a *Hezbollah* unit operating in the "security zone". The abduction set off a period of heavy artillery duelling between the two sides.

Assassinations of officials of rival Palestinian groups in Lebanon

The inter-Palestinian power struggle in Lebanon between the mainstream *Al-Fatah* and the rejectionist Revolutionary Council of *Fatah* (RCF, the Abu Nidal Group) continued in April [see p. 39390 for fighting in March].

Col. Ihsan Mohammed Salem (Yunis Awad), *Al-Fatah*'s highest-ranking official in Beirut, was assassinated in the Beirut suburb of Talet al-Kayyat on April 1. On April 15 Faysal Salih, an RCF official, and his baby son were shot dead in Sidon. Four days later Ibrahim Abdel Magid Turkiyeh, an *Al-Fatah* official, was shot dead in front of his home in Sidon. Also on April 19, Voice of the Mountain radio reported that the bodies of two RCF members had that day been discovered by security officials in Sidon.

Prime Minister's visit to Gulf, Syria and Western Europe

Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri launched a drive for increased Gulf funding to finance his government's reconstruction programme with a visit to Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Bahrain in early April.

Hariri's trip to the Gulf followed the unveiling in March of the government's US\$12,900 million reconstruction plan [see p. 39390].

Hariri visited Syria on April 14 for routine talks with President Hafez al-Assad.

In late April Hariri visited France and Italy for talks which again centred on his government's reconstruction plan.

■ Last article p. 39390; reference article pp. R140-41.

ALGERIA

Operations against Islamists - Attacks on security forces

The security forces carried out a number of operations against Islamist militants during April. According to a report in the *Middle East Economic Digest* of April 30, "an increasing number of units and organizations" were also involved in anti-Islamist operations, including the *Organization Secrète pour le Salut de l'Algérie* (OSSA), which was composed of former members of the military security services.

Omar Leulmi, an underground Islamist leader and mufti of the Armed Islamic Movement, was shot dead with three colleagues by the security forces on April 6 in Khemis el-Kechna, south of Algiers. The official *Algérie Presse Service* (APS) news agency reported on April 19 that four Islamists had been killed in two separate clashes with the security

forces. Algerian television reported on April 15 that the security forces had arrested six "terrorists" of the *Cité Mahieddine* group in connection with the attempted assassination of Tahar Hamdi, Minister of Labour and Social Affairs, in March [see p. 39392].

A mass trial of 41 Islamists charged with conspiracy to overthrow the state, membership of terrorist groups, and attempted murder, opened in the western city of Oran on April 13.

Islamist groups for their part also carried out various attacks against the security forces during April.

The police chief of Larbaa district (some 30 km south of Algiers) was assassinated by three gunmen on April 12. The next day three gendarmes were killed during an attack in Tlemcen province. On April 17 nine police officers were killed by Islamists after being ambushed in M'Sila. APS reported on April 24 that Maj.-Gen. Kamel Abderrahim, a former commander of naval forces, had that day narrowly survived an assassination attempt in the town of Rouiba, east of Algiers.

Approval of 1993 economic plan

The Council of Ministers met on April 14 and approved a national economic plan for 1993, as well as a decree on establishing a stock exchange.

The economic plan aimed to achieve a 2 per cent growth rate in gross domestic product (GDP) while limiting inflation to below 20 per cent. Excluding commitments to the International Monetary Fund (IMF), external debt was scheduled to be around US\$23,300 million, or about 44 per cent of GDP, compared with almost 56 per cent for 1992.

Reversal of public-sector reforms

The *Middle East Economic Digest* of April 30 reported that the government had decided to halt the restructuring of loss-making public companies.

The decision was taken following talks with the national trade union, the *Union Générale des Travailleurs Algériens* (UGTA), which had opposed moves to introduce market reforms. The report stated that the move was "unlikely to please international donors", who tended to view public-sector reform as an essential element of economic restructuring.

■ Last article pp. 39392-93; reference article pp. R133-34.

TUNISIA

Ruling on status of LTDH - Human rights protest

The Tunisian League of Human Rights (LTDH) resumed its activities in early April following a court ruling on March 26 which suspended the application to the LTDH of a law governing the membership of private associations.

This law, adopted in March 1992, had required all such associations to open their membership to members of all political parties, while at the same time prohibiting office holders in political parties

from belonging to such associations. The LTDH had refused to comply with the law and in June 1992 had decided to disband [see p. 38982].

On April 9 more than 200 intellectuals denounced the human rights record of the government of President Zine el-Abidine Ben Ali, signing a petition condemning the "suffocation of expression and organization". They accused the government of "serious abuses" and called for an end to the political domination of Ben Ali's *Rassemblement constitutionnel démocratique* (RCD). While acknowledging the LTDH ruling, the protesters warned that the League remained vulnerable.

On April 23 President Ben Ali announced the country's acceptance of Article 41 of the 1966 International Covenant of Civil and Political Rights.

Renaming of Communist Party

Following the March announcement of its relaunch [see p. 39393] the Tunisian Communist Party (PCT) held its 10th and final conference on April 22-23 where the *Mouvement de la rénovation* (Renewal Movement) was formally launched to replace it. Mohamed Harmel, hitherto secretary-general of the PCT, was elected to the same post in the new party, and Mohamed Ali el Halouani was elected as chair of the 40-member constituent council.

■ Last article pp. 39295; 39393; reference article p. R145.

LIBYA

Renewal of UN sanctions

The UN Security Council agreed on April 8 to extend for a further 120 days the application of limited sanctions against Libya in force since April 1992 [for initial imposition of sanctions see pp. 38839; 38883-84; for renewal of sanctions in December 1992 see p. 39249].

UN sanctions were imposed after Libya had refused to surrender two men accused of blowing up a Pan Am airliner over Lockerbie, Scotland, in December 1988. The same two men were also wanted by the French authorities in connection with an investigation into the bombing of a French UTA airliner over Niger in September 1989.

The sanctions renewed included a ban on flights to and from Libya, cuts in Libyan diplomatic missions and an arms embargo. After the sanctions were renewed, the USA let it be known that it was consulting with its allies on the introduction of additional sanctions, including a ban on Libyan oil exports. However, European countries such as Italy and Germany, which imported large amounts of Libyan oil, were known to oppose the widening of sanctions.

Reports suggested that the Arab League Secretary-General, Ahmed Esmat Abdel Meguid, would continue with his efforts to broker a compromise acceptable to Libya and the West. Efforts by a number of Arab leaders (including President Zine el-Abidine Ben Ali of Tunisia and PLO chair Yassir Arafat) to arrange such a compromise in the weeks leading up to the renewal had all failed.

Large demonstrations were held in Libya to protest against the Security Council decision. A petition delivered by protesters to Western embassies in Tripoli reiterated Libya's position that it was unwilling to hand over the two men to the United Kingdom or the USA, both countries with which it did not have an extradition treaty. However, the petition emphasized that Libya welcomed any initiative which was compatible with Libyan sovereignty.

In an interview with the *International Herald Tribune* of April 16, Col. Moamer al Kadhafi, the Libyan leader, indicated that he was prepared to adopt a more conciliatory approach towards the new US administration; he wanted to "end the Libyan problem in [US President] Bill Clinton's term", and described Clinton as "the saviour of the new world". Kadhafi also issued a strong condemnation of Islamic fundamentalism and described Islamic militants as "mad dogs" and "terrorists".

Kadhafi's speech on stricter implementation of sharia

Kadhafi called for the stricter implementation of *sharia* (Islamic law) in a televised speech broadcast on April 2. According to the *Middle East Economic Digest* of April 16, some analysts had interpreted the speech as an attempt by Kadhafi to placate religious opponents of his regime.

In his speech, Kadhafi advocated the introduction of punishment by amputation for robbery and public flogging for adultery.

■ Last article p. 39344; reference article pp. R141-42.

EGYPT

Appointment of new Interior Minister - Other appointments

On April 18 President Mohammed Hosni Mubarak dismissed Gen. Mohammed Abdel-Halim Moussa as Interior Minister. A few days before his removal, Gen. Moussa had revealed that a group of *ulema* (Muslim religious scholars) and intellectuals had agreed to mediate between the Islamic "extremists" and the security forces. According to a number of reports, Gen. Moussa's acceptance of the mediation offer had cost him his portfolio. Moussa was replaced by Gen. Hussein Mohammed al-Alfi, who, like Moussa, was a former governor of Asyut.

Following his appointment al-Alfi vowed to launch a "decisive and comprehensive confrontation with the outlaws". In an interview with *Al-Ahram* of April 23, al-Alfi ruled out the possibility of entering into any form of dialogue with "terrorist groups".

In another appointment announced on April 18, Youssef Boutros-Ghali, a nephew of UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali, was appointed as a Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs.

Mubarak appointed nine new provincial governors on April 21: Faruq Mohammed al-Tallawi (Fayyum); Abd al-Rahim Hashim Shihatah (Giza);

Mohammed Samih al-Sa'id (Asyut); Mohammed Zahir Abd al-Rahman (Matruh); Mustafa Inrahim Sadiq (Suez); Mohammed Izzat al-Sayyid (Wadi al-Jadid); Fakhr al-Din Khalid Abduh (Port Said); Ibrahim Hasan al-Shaykh (Dagahliyah); and Adli Abd al-Shakur Husayn (Minufiyah).

Assassination of security official - Assassination attempt against Information Minister

Brig.-Gen. Mohammed al-Shaimi, deputy head of security in Asyut province, was shot dead on April 11 when his car was ambushed in Abu Tig. Two police officers also died in the attack. Security sources blamed the attack on the *Gammat i-Islami* group.

Brig.-Gen. al-Shaimi had been appointed as deputy head of security in Asyut—the heartland of militant unrest—in early April. He was the most senior government official to be assassinated since militants shot dead Rifaat al-Mahgoub, Speaker of the People's National Assembly, in October 1990 [see pp. 37794-95].

Sawfat Sharif, the Minister of Information, narrowly escaped an assassination attempt in the Cairo suburb of Heliopolis on April 20. Sharif was slightly injured when gunmen opened fire on him with automatic weapons; his bodyguard and driver suffered serious injuries in the attack. Responsibility for the attack was subsequently claimed by *Gammat*. Following the attack, the security forces arrested more than 500 people in a sweep through the Cairo suburbs.

A police officer was assassinated in Dayrut, Asyut, on April 28.

Sentencing to death of Muslim "extremists"

A military court on April 22 convicted 32 Muslim "extremists" of attempting to overthrow the government, organizing a banned group, illegal possession of arms, and attacking foreign tourists. Seven of the 32 were sentenced to death and the remainder were given prison sentences ranging from two years to life. The panel of four judges acquitted 17 others. The defendants chanted anti-government slogans as the sentences were delivered.

Continued threats to tourists

Despite the government's crackdown in early March on underground Islamic groups [see p. 39392], tourist sites remained a target for attack.

On March 30 an explosion occurred inside the Pyramid of Chephren, the second-largest of the three Pyramids of Giza on the outskirts of Cairo. Two workmen were injured in the blast, but a group of Russian tourists standing outside the Pyramid were unharmed. On April 1, government officials announced plans to bolster security at all tourist sites with police checkpoints. After the explosion the security forces detained more than 200 suspected Muslim "extremists" in late March and early April.

On April 8, unidentified gunmen attacked a Nile cruiser carrying German tourists. No-one was in-

jured in the attack, which took place near the southern town of El-Qusiya, an area where Muslim "extremists" had carried out a number of attacks on tourist boats and buses.

IMF talks

Talks took place in Cairo in early April between Egyptian officials and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) on a successor agreement to the 1991 standby credit facility, scheduled to end in May 1993. The IMF had freed the final tranche of the 1991 credit in March [see p. 39392].

■ Last article p. 39392; reference article pp. R135-36.

IRAN

Currency reform - Fall in oil revenues

The Bank Markazi (the central bank) on April 13 declared the rial "fully convertible", ending weeks of uncertainty triggered by a 95.6 per cent official devaluation on March 27.

The announcement, aimed at countering press criticism of the bank's failure to provide clear guidelines, came amid fluctuations on the domestic money market which saw the rial dip nearly 20 per cent below its official value against the dollar.

On April 17 the Bank Markazi devalued the rial a further 6.7 per cent against the dollar, to a new rate of US\$1.00=1,640.7 rials as at April 19, 1993, and stepped up the sale of foreign exchange in an attempt to control the volatile currency market.

Fears of rising inflation following the rial's devaluation were aggravated by local press reports indicating a 30 per cent increase in the price of household goods since early March. On March 28 the government had banned the doubling of bread prices, saying that wheat and flour would continue to be subsidized at the old exchange rate. New regulations also required state-run enterprises wanting to raise prices to seek official permission.

Fall in oil revenues

Figures released by the Plan and Budget Organization in mid-April showed that lower exports and a weak dollar had contributed to a fall in crude oil exports which stood at US\$10,500 million, about US\$1,900 million short of target, in the first nine months of the year ending March 20. (Oil export figures for the last quarter of the year were not yet available.) However, the impact of diminishing oil revenues on the country's trade balance in the first nine months of the year was offset by curbs on imports which totalled only US\$17,000 million, well below the US\$20,800 million target set by the government to withstand the debt crisis created in previous years.

The import of oil products over the year was currently estimated at US\$1,800 million, but President Hashemi Ali Akbar Rafsanjani, in a report marking Islamic Republic Day on April 1, forecast that increased capacity at newly installed refineries at

Arak and Abadan would remove the need for oil imports by March 1994.

Details of Iran's long-term oil output strategy released by the Oil Ministry in early April also projected a rise in crude production capacity to more than 5,500,000 barrels per day (bpd) by the year 2000. The increase, amounting to about 1,000,000 bpd on existing capacity, was expected to consolidate Iran's position as the second-largest oil producer after Saudi Arabia in the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC).

Relations with Malaysia and Russia - Nuclear co-operation agreements

Agreements and memoranda covering co-operation in mining, oil, telecommunications, health care and tourism were signed with Malaysia during a visit by Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamed on April 3-6. Bilateral trade between the two countries was expected to increase to US\$200,000,000 annually.

Three agreements on consular and diplomatic ties were concluded after talks in Tehran between Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati and his Russian counterpart Andrei Kozyrev on March 29.

The *Majlis* on April 13 ratified separate agreements with Russia and China, concluded in July 1989 (with the former Soviet Union) and September 1992, respectively, on nuclear co-operation for peaceful purposes [see pp. 37725; 39116].

Relations with USA

Relations with the USA continued to deteriorate during April amid accusations by Iran of an active US campaign to isolate Iran.

Tension had grown after the World Bank suggested on March 31 that loans to Iran, totalling US\$847,000,000 since 1991, could be suspended if US charges of Iranian violations of UN sanctions against Iraq [see p. 39391] were to be substantiated. The statement followed the widely reported testimony of US Secretary of State Warren Christopher before a Senate subcommittee on March 30 in which he branded Iran "an international outlaw" which "did not deserve the support of the World Bank". In mid-March the USA had denounced Iran for sponsoring terrorist attacks in Egypt and Sudan [see p. 39392].

Agreements with Croatia

An agreement involving the sale of 135,000 tonnes of crude oil to Croatia was reported by the Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran (VIRI) on April 11. In early April the two countries had concluded an agreement on expanding annual bilateral trade to US\$200,000,000.

■ Last article pp. 39391-92; reference article pp. R136-37.

IRAQ

UN weapons inspection - Sanctions crisis - US air attacks

UN weapons inspectors led by Maurizio Zif-ferero, Deputy Director-General of the Inter-

national Atomic Energy Agency, arrived on April 19 to supervise the shipment of stockpiles of irradiated uranium out of the country. The uranium, estimated to total about 40 kg, was due to be removed from the nuclear facility at Thuwaitha.

Sanctions crisis

On April 8 the Minister for Labour, Social Affairs and Health, Umeed Madhat Mubarak, claimed that Iraqi industry was "grinding to a halt" as a result of the continued imposition of UN sanctions. On April 9 Mubarak said that UN sanctions had also forced hospitals to treat only emergency cases, and to enforce stringent cuts in operations, blood tests and X-rays.

Appeals for the lifting of sanctions were made by two Russian parliamentary delegations which visited Iraq on April 6 and 12.

Fresh estimates of the cost of the Gulf war by the Arab Monetary Fund (AMF), reported on April 26, showed that the total cost to the region, excluding damage to the environment and stagnation in the rate of economic growth, stood at US\$676,000 million in 1990-91.

US aerial attacks

US air attacks on Iraqi installations in the north led to accusations by the government that the US administration intended to ignore recent Iraqi efforts to improve relations between the two countries [see pp. 39291-92; 39342].

The accusations came after two US aircraft patrolling the northern air exclusion zone on April 18 destroyed a radar installation 55 km south of the city of Mosul, south of the 36th parallel. A spokesman for the US Defence Department said that the planes had acted after radar near an anti-aircraft missile battery locked on to them.

Earlier, on April 9, US aircraft patrolling the northern exclusion zone had dropped four cluster bombs at a dam site in the province of Nineveh, apparently in retaliation against Iraqi anti-aircraft fire. The *Ba'ath* Party daily *ath Thawra* of April 11 expressed dismay at this attack, which, it said, "embod[ie]d the fact that US officials do not want to understand Iraq's standpoint and its genuine wish to establish new ties".

Reported uprising

Opposition parties claimed that several senior military and *Ba'ath* Party officials had been executed in mid-April following a planned uprising by armed Shias in a predominantly Shia neighbourhood in Baghdad. On April 17, however, Foreign Minister Muhammad Said Kazim al-Sahhaf denied all reports of disturbances in Baghdad.

According to the opposition claims—which spoke also of the execution of former Interior Minister Samir Muhammad Abdul Wahhab, replaced in March 1991 [see p. 38083]—special security forces had laid siege to the area after gunmen attempted to abduct the current Interior Minister, Watban Ibrahim al-Hasan. Other reports had indicated public opposition to the creation of economic crime squads, under the personal supervision of Hasan,

aimed at curbing trade on the black market. By mid-April, it was said, more than 300 traders had been arrested for overcharging on price-controlled commodities.

Opposition activities

Moves to institute war crimes proceedings against President Saddam Hussein were confirmed by the US Secretary of State Warren Christopher after talks in Washington on April 27 with representatives of the Iraqi National Congress (INC). In late March an INC delegation had met the United Kingdom Prime Minister John Major [see p. 39391].

The inauguration in London of a new opposition grouping, the Central Iraqi Committee for Dialogue and Follow-up, was reported on April 20. The group, regarded as a potential rival to the INC, was headed by Gen. Aref Abdel-Razzak, briefly Prime Minister in September 1966 and a former INC notable.

New Kurdish government

The formation of a new Kurdish government headed by Kosrat Abdullah Rasul was announced on April 26. Rasul, appointed Prime Minister on April 11, replaced Fuad Masum who resigned in March [ibid.].

The Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) on April 19 issued a statement condemning Iranian artillery attacks against bases in Iraqi Kurdistan allegedly under the control of the Iranian Kurdish dissident group, the Kurdistan Democratic Party of Iran (KDPI). More than 6,000 Iraqi and Iranian Kurds in the region were said to have fled their homes during the attacks.

New head of Turkoman Party

The Iraqi National Turkoman Party, based in exile in Ankara, elected Muzaffer Arslan as its leader on April 18.

■ Last article pp. 39390-91; reference article pp. R137-38.

YEMEN

General election

A general election held on April 27 effectively completed the Yemeni unification process which began in May 1990 with the merger of North and South Yemen [see pp. 37470-71]. Elections had originally been scheduled for November 1992, but were postponed at short notice [see p. 39216]. The election heralded the end of the temporary power-sharing government which had ruled since formal unification, comprising the General People's Congress (GPC), the former ruling party in the North, and the Yemen Socialist Party (YSP), which had ruled in the South.

In the months prior to the election there was some speculation that the GPC and YSP might formally merge and contest the election as one party [see p. 39343]; in the event, however, the two parties contested the poll as separate entities.

As the first free, multiparty general election on the Arabian peninsula, the poll also had

Distribution of seats after Yemeni general election

April 27, 1993

Party	Seats
General People's Congress	121
Yemeni Alliance for Reform (<i>al-Islah</i>)	62
Yemeni Socialist Party	56
Arab Socialist <i>Ba'ath</i> Party	7
Truth Party	2
Nasserite Popular Unionist Organization	1
Nasserite Correction Organization	1
United Democratic Front	1
Independents	47
Undeclared as of May 1	3
Total number of seats	301

considerable regional implications. The *Middle East International* of April 16 commented that Yemen's "richer and more autocratic neighbours" viewed the election with "disquiet".

The elections were contested by some 4,730 candidates who competed for 301 seats in the Council of Representatives. Fewer than 30 per cent of the candidates were formally affiliated with one of the 50 or more parties standing in the election.

Security was intensified during the election period, with as many as 35,000 troops deployed in the capital Sana'a. Although voting was generally peaceful, there were reports of sporadic violence. The Agence France-Presse (AFP) news agency reported on April 29 that four people had been killed and five wounded during election-related violence. Turnout was reported as high and, despite some allegations of vote rigging and intimidation, most commentators reported that the process had been fair.

The GPC, led by President Ali Abdullah Saleh, gained the largest number of seats in the elections. The party maintained control of its traditional tribal strongholds in the north, and commentators agreed that the vote had served to enhance the personal legitimacy of President Saleh. The YSP, which finished third with 56 seats, maintained its southern support base. The Yemen Reform Group (*al-Islah*), which like the GPC had a northern tribal base, performed well, winning 62 seats. Prior to the election, the *Islah* leader Sheikh al-Ahmar, had made it clear that he would be happy to enter into a coalition government with the GPC.

Improved relations with Gulf states

Yemen's relations with the Gulf states, which had suffered as a result of Yemen's broadly pro-Iraqi stance during the Gulf war, showed signs of improving in March and April.

Abdul Ali al-Karim al-Iryani, Yemen's Minister of Foreign Affairs, visited the United Arab Emirates (UAE) in late March. Al-Iryani's visit was the first by a senior Yemeni official since the Gulf war, before which the UAE had been a significant aid donor to Yemen.

Vice-President Ali Salem al-Bid visited Oman on April 6-8, for the first high-level talks since the

signing of a border agreement in October 1992. During al-Bid's visit, the two sides agreed on measures to open border points and increase bilateral trade.

■ Last article p. 39343; reference article pp. R146-47.

ARAB REGIONAL AFFAIRS

Meeting of GCC Foreign Ministers

Foreign Ministers of the Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC) states (Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates) met in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, on April 4-5 [for November 1992 Foreign Ministers' meeting see p. 39214; for December 1992 summit see p. 39248]. At the meeting Shaikh Fahim Bin Sultan al-Qasimi replaced Abdullah Yacoub Bishara as GCC Secretary-General.

One of the main topics of discussion was the proposed imposition of energy taxes in the United States [see p. 39309] and in European Community (EC) countries [see p. 38939]. Ministers condemned the planned taxes as a barrier to world trade, but stopped short of setting out measures which they might take to counter the taxes. According to analysts, retaliatory measures would be discussed at a conference of OPEC and non-OPEC oil producing states in Muscat on April 13 [see pp. 39441-42].

The Foreign Ministers condemned "Iraqi border violations [against Kuwait] and delaying tactics" and called on Iraq to implement all UN Security Council resolutions. Iranian conditions for resuming talks with the United Arab Emirates over the three disputed islands of Abu Musa, Tunb al-Kubra and Tunb al-Sughra, were denounced as "unacceptable" [see p. 39165]. Also discussed were the Middle East peace process and events in Somalia, Afghanistan and Bosnia-Herzegovina.

A report on the Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran radio on April 6 claimed that the GCC Foreign Ministers had discussed the GCC's Damascus Declaration security pact with Egypt and Syria [see pp. 38116-17; 38885; 38985; 39116]. The report alleged that GCC members were in disagreement over economic aspects of the pact, with some countries refusing to extend financial assistance to Syria and Egypt.

GCC and Egyptian and Syrian Finance Ministers met in Qatar on April 18 to discuss the economic aspects of the Damascus Declaration. GCC and Egyptian and Syrian Foreign Ministers met in Abu Dhabi on April 29-30.

Arab League meeting

The Arab League Council (the organization's supreme organ) convened in Cairo on April 18-19 for its 99th ordinary session. Among the topics discussed were Libya's relations with the West, the Palestinian issue and the peace process.

The Council approved the formation of a political committee on water issues. In a statement issued on April 19, the Arab League Secretary-General, Ahmed Esmat Abdel Meguid, emphasized that "Arab water security" was an important question requiring "political attention and security measures".

The Council discussed the application of the Federal Islamic Republic of the Comoros to join the Arab League, but no decision was taken.

■ Last article p. 39248; reference articles p. R147.

IN BRIEF

WESTERN SAHARA: Yakoub Khan, UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali's special representative for Western Sahara, met with Moroccan and Algerian leaders in early April to discuss plans for the holding of the referendum on self-determination for Western Sahara; in early March the UN Security Council had unanimously approved Resolution 809 calling for it to be held before the end of 1993 [see p. 39393].

on punitive US duties on EC steel imports [see pp. 39298; 39346].

Continuing disagreement over aircraft subsidies

Two days of talks in Brussels between EC and US officials ended on April 1 without agreement over subsidies to civil aircraft manufacturers [see p. 39346]. EC officials alleged that the USA had failed to provide sufficient data on subsidies paid to US civil aircraft makers. US officials, however, rejected EC suggestions that the USA had broken the terms of an EC-US accord signed in July 1992 [ibid.].

Ruling against South Korea

A GATT disputes panel was reported on April 29 to have ruled that South Korea had been in breach of fair trade rules for ordering an anti-dumping investigation, and imposing duties in 1991, on polyacetal resin imports from Japan and the USA.

New accessions

GATT membership rose to 110 following the accessions of Saint Lucia (April 13), the Czech Republic (April 15), Slovakia (April 15), and Dominica (April 20).

■ Last article p. 39394; reference article pp. R151-52.

INDUSTRIALIZED COUNTRIES

G-7 meeting on aid to Russia - G-7 Finance Ministers' meeting

Finance and Foreign Ministers from the Group of Seven (G-7) industrialized countries held an extraordinary meeting in Tokyo on April 14-15 on increased support for Russia's reform programme. They approved more than US\$5,000 million in fresh multilateral assistance (bringing total multilateral aid to Russia over the past year to over US\$43,000 million—see also p. 39422), but refused to disclose how much had been specifically allocated by the G-7. At a separate meeting on April 15 with senior Russian officials led by

Deputy Prime Minister Boris Fedorov, G-7 ministers reiterated their support for Russian reform.

Reports said that a new US initiative to create a fund worth US\$4,000 million to promote industrial privatization in Russia had been rejected by ministers from some G-7 countries, including Japan, who maintained that it was not clear how the money would be spent. It was also understood that Japan was unwilling to commit additional funds beyond the US\$1,820 million Japanese aid package to Russia announced on April 14 [see p. 39419].

On April 24-25 the G-7 Trade, Industry and Economy Ministers held a joint meeting in Tokyo with their counterparts from the former Soviet republics of Byelarus, Kazakhstan, Russia, and Ukraine, and the former communist states of the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia, to discuss support for reforms towards market economies.

G-7 Finance Ministers' meeting

G-7 Finance Ministers meeting in Washington on April 29 discussed the objective of promoting stable non-inflationary growth, and policies to "help put more of our citizens to work".

Their statement emphasized co-operative action, sound economic policies and further efforts to liberalize trade. It noted the undesirability of excessive exchange rate volatility. With interest rates in Europe now generally lower [for latest German market rate cuts see p. 39434], they suggested that the containment of labour costs and inflationary pressures could create "room for a further decline in interest rates" following the implementation of current policies to reduce fiscal deficits.

Ministers also renewed their call for Japan to encourage global recovery by stimulating increased domestic demand [see p. 39346]. The appeal came amid continuing concern that a recent Japanese expansion programme [see pp. 39049; 39236] was oriented more to reducing public spending than to boosting personal consumption with a view to reducing Japan's trade surplus.

■ Last article p. 39346.

IMF

New members

Membership of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) reached 177 with two new admissions in April.

The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia became a full member on April 21, with an initial quota of 33,500,000 special drawing rights (SDR) and provisions for an increase to SDR 49,600,000. Tajikistan became a full member on April 27, with an initial quota of SDR 40,000,000; it was the last of the 15 former Soviet republics to do so.

■ Last article p. 39298; reference article p. R154.

INTERNATIONAL

GATT

US-EC partial agreement on public procurement

The European Communities (EC) and the USA reached a partial compromise on April 21 in their dispute over public procurement contracts, which had threatened to prevent completion of the Uruguay Round of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) [see pp. 39346; 39394]. Failure to agree over bidding for public contracts in telecommunications, however, led the USA to announce that it would go ahead with the imposition of limited sanctions against European firms.

The partial breakthrough followed talks in Washington on April 19-20 between the EC External Economic Affairs and Trade Commissioner Sir Leon Brittan and the US Representative for Trade Negotiations Mickey Kantor. Under the settlement the EC agreed to waive Article 29 of the EC Utilities Directive allowing US companies to bid for public utility contracts covering heavy electrical equipment; in return, the USA lifted restrictions against EC bids for five publicly owned US federal utilities, plus the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA), with a view to the eventual elimination of the "Buy American" clauses at sub-federal or state level.

The EC's refusal to extend a similar waiver to the telecommunications sector was reportedly in retaliation for the US decision not to include US telecommunications companies such as AT&T and the "Baby Bells" as part of the deal on grounds that they were private entities. The EC had argued that, since these companies had de facto monopolies on voice telephony and AT&T was a manufacturer and supplier as well as a carrier, the US telephone market should be opened to European competition.

On April 21 Kantor indicated that US penalties against European firms would be about half the US\$50,000,000 originally contemplated, or a rough equivalent of the amount of business US companies were expected to lose because of restrictions on bidding for government telecommunications contracts in Europe.

On April 28 a GATT watchdog committee accepted an EC request to arrange conciliation talks

OPEC

Meeting with non-OPEC members

Oil Ministers from more than 25 oil producing countries representing the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and the non-OPEC grouping, the Independent Petroleum Exporting Countries, who met jointly in Muscat, Oman, on April 13, issued an appeal against increasing energy taxes in Western countries [for UK tax see p. 39383]. In their communiqué ministers claimed that "a new wave of tax increases [would] have a destabilizing effect on the oil market" and would reduce producers' ability to invest in new production capacity.

Ministers also agreed to establish a joint working group to monitor oil demand and revenues, and to examine "options open . . . to mitigate the impact [of oil taxes] on their [national] economies". OPEC's president Alirio Parra said afterwards that the meeting had been intended to open a dialogue with Western countries, rather than to seek confrontation by pushing for higher oil prices.

At an informal session in Muscat on April 12, OPEC Oil Ministers pledged to respect output quotas set in February amid allegations of flagrant violations by some member states [see p. 39346].

■ Last article pp. 39346-47; reference article p. R155.

CSCE

"Open Skies" agreement between Hungary and Romania

Hungary on April 6 and 8 conducted observation flights over Romania under a Hungarian-Romanian "Open Skies" agreement in keeping with the Open Skies agreement negotiated by the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) [see pp. 37267; 38841], and signed by both countries in March 1992 [see p. 38841].

On March 30 the Hungarian National Assembly had unanimously voted in favour of ratifying the CSCE's Open Skies agreement.

■ Last article p. 39250; reference article p. R150.

UNITED NATIONS

Admission of Macedonia

The UN Security Council on April 7 approved, without a vote, Resolution 817 recommending the admission to UN membership of the provisionally named Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. The admission, endorsed by the UN General Assembly on April 8, brought total UN membership to 181.

Approval followed Greek concessions in February accepting international arbitration over the issue of Macedonia's name, to which it had been opposed on grounds that it was the name already given to the existing Greek province of Macedonia [see p. 39328].

Greece had also argued that international recognition of the former Yugoslav republic would encourage Slavic territorial ambitions against northern Greece.

The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia was admitted without a flag pending consideration by an arbitration committee of Greek objections to Macedonia's use of the star of Vergina as its national symbol.

■ Last article p. 39395; reference article p. R156.

UNIDO

New Director-General

Mauricio de María y Campos (Mexico) was appointed Director-General of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) for a four-year term by a special session of the General Conference on March 30.

De María y Campos, who had been UNIDO Deputy Director-General for Industrial Operations since July 1992, succeeded Domingo L. Siazon Jr (Philippines) who resigned at the end of January. Deputy Director-General Louis Alexandrenne (Senegal) had been acting Director-General in the interim.

■ Reference article p. R158.

WHO

Continuing controversy over Nakajima

The position of Hiroshi Nakajima, nominated in January for a second term as Director-General of the World Health Organization (WHO) [see p. 39299], came under renewed scrutiny after a WHO report on April 2 alleged financial irregularities involving payments to WHO Executive Board members who were believed to have voted in favour of Nakajima. The report imputed no blame to Nakajima.

Detailing five contracts in the second half of 1992, the report showed that all involved Japanese funds and Executive Board members, and that all were approved by Yugi Kawaguchi, the Japanese head of the WHO's key department of planning, co-ordination and co-operation. The USA, which had opposed Nakajima's renomination, had recently accused Japan of buying the votes of developing countries to secure Nakajima's appointment.

A WHO statement issued on behalf of Nakajima on April 2 said he had noted with "satisfaction" that no fraud had been uncovered. On April 21 it was reported that Kawaguchi had been transferred to assume new responsibilities as head of the WHO's inter-agency department. WHO officials denied

that the transfer signified a demotion or a punishment.

AIDS crisis in Eastern Europe

The prospect of an imminent epidemic of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) in central and eastern Europe was underlined in a warning issued on April 7 by the Director of the WHO Global Programme on AIDS, Michael Merson.

Speaking in Berlin Merson said that while the number of registered AIDS cases in central and eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union remained low in comparison with Western Europe—3,026 against 84,476—people could be infected with the AIDS virus for up to 10 years before showing any symptoms.

The WHO had recently called for the allocation of US\$550,000,000 for a three-year programme to help combat AIDS in the region.

New memberships

Total WHO membership rose to 185 following the admission of Estonia on March 31 and of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia on April 22.

■ Last articles pp. 39299; 39347; reference article R159.

OIC

Foreign Ministers' meeting

Foreign Ministers of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) met in Karachi, Pakistan, on April 25-28.

(Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic, visiting Saudi Arabia on April 10, had used the opportunity of the award of the King Faisal international prize for services to Islam, and of a large donation from the Saudi government and private sources to Bosnian Muslims, to castigate other Islamic governments for making insufficient efforts to defend Islam and to fulfil their obligations towards Bosnian Muslims.)

A unanimous resolution urged the UN Security Council immediately to take "effective steps, including the use of force, to end the Serbian aggression against Bosnia-Herzegovina". Ministers called also for the imposition of a complete economic blockade on Serbia-Montenegro and the freezing of all Serbian and Montenegrin assets abroad. Additional aid of US\$80,000,000 to assist Bosnia was approved on April 28. Earlier a six-member co-ordination committee led by Pakistan had been established to draw up plans to help Bosnia.

On the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan, ministers on April 27 condemned the "Armenian aggression against Azerbaijan" and its "occupation" of Azeri territory [see p. 39424]. They also urged member states to provide greater financial and humanitarian assistance to Azerbaijan.

A fact-finding report on Kashmir, submitted to ministers on April 25, recommended the consideration of sanctions against India to end "repression" in the state.

■ Last articles pp. 39299; 39347; reference article p. R155.

ICRC

Anti-landmine campaign

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies launched a campaign on April 21 to halt the use of anti-personnel landmines which they claimed had "spread terror among civilians". An ICRC symposium held in Montreux, Switzerland, on April 21-23 to coincide with the campaign showed that landmines caused 800 deaths and 450 injuries every month.

Reports suggested that the campaign had been timed to heighten public awareness and build pressure on governments ahead of a review of the 1981 UN convention against the use of especially inhumane conventional weapons [see p. 30967], which, while restricting the indiscriminate use of landmines, applied only to international conflicts. It was understood that the ICRC was concerned to extend the convention to cover civil wars.

■ Last articles pp. 38795; 38843; 39395.

IPU

New Delhi conference

The 89th semi-annual conference of the International Parliamentary Union (IPU), held in New Delhi, India, on April 12-17, was attended by more than 500 parliamentarians from some 100 countries.

Indian President Shankar Dayal Sharma, in what was regarded as a veiled reference to Pakistan's alleged involvement in recent devastating bomb explosions in Bombay [see p. 39370], warned delegates in his opening speech against the dangers of state-sponsored terrorism. On April 17 the Pakistani delegate accused India of using the forum to "malign" Pakistan.

The most notable of the resolutions passed on the final day urged national parliaments to support the UN General Assembly's 1992 initiative on setting up a global arms register, and called for such a register to cover not only the arms trade but also arms production. The IPU also backed UN sanctions against Yugoslavia.

The IPU human rights committee appealed to a number of states on behalf of imprisoned parliamentarians, and in particular asked that Burma should allow a visit by an IPU delegation, while an open letter to the Burmese government called for the release of the opposition leader and 1991 Nobel Peace laureate Aung San Suu Kyi.

ENVIRONMENT

Gabcikovo dam dispute

Hungary and Slovakia agreed on April 5 to take their dispute over the Gabcikovo dam on the Danube [see pp. 39152; R112] to the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in The Hague. The agreement followed mediation by

the European Commission. The two countries also agreed to hold regular meetings at prime ministerial level on other bilateral issues, such as the treatment of the Hungarian minority in Slovakia.

Russian nuclear plant explosion

An explosion occurred on April 6 at the Tomsk-7 nuclear reprocessing plant in Russian Siberia. The blast was reported to have contaminated 120 sq km of forest near the city of Tomsk, but the Russian Atomic Energy Ministry insisted that the amount of plutonium released was "negligible". This claim was broadly supported by officials from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), who visited the site in the week after the incident.

US decision to sign biodiversity treaty

US President Bill Clinton announced on April 21 that he would sign the Convention on Biological Diversity, agreed at the UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in June 1992 [see p. 38947].

The USA had hitherto refused to sign the convention, chiefly on the grounds that it would prejudice the interests of US biotechnology companies [ibid.]. In making his announcement, Clinton stipulated that the US signature would be accompanied by an "interpretative statement" clarifying the US view of supposed "ambiguities" in the treaty which would affect the biotechnology industry.

Clinton's call for old-growth forests decision

Clinton instructed his staff to prepare a strategy within two months on the future of the Pacific north-west's old-growth forests (which represented some of the richest ecological areas in the northern hemisphere), following a meeting on April 1 in Portland, Oregon, where he had heard conflicting arguments from the logging industry and from environmentalists. The threat from logging had in part been restricted by the listing of the local northern spotted owl as an endangered species, thereby conferring legal protection on its habitat.

■ Last article p. 39395; reference article p. R151.

SPACE RESEARCH

Russian involvement in US space station

A leaked April 13 letter from US government science adviser John H. Gibbons to the head of the National Aeronautic and Space Administration (NASA), Daniel S. Goldin, emphasised that "no decisions" had been made to involve Russia in the redesign of the *Freedom* space station. However, Gibbons had told NASA's station redesign team on April 3 that

the USA and its partners in the project (Japan, Canada and 10 European countries) had decided to give "full consideration" to the use of Russian hardware and expertise in the redesigned station, and on April 6 he had announced that the USA would seek Russian assistance in the project.

The US administration had ordered the redesign in February, stating that projected costs of upwards of US\$31,000 million were too high [see p. 39347].

Shuttle mission

The US space shuttle *Discovery* returned safely to earth on April 17 after nine days in space—one day more than planned—with the primary objective of investigating the state of the depleted ozone layer.

Discovery's launch was postponed by a day to April 7 due to a last-minute malfunction. This was the second instance of launching difficulties within two weeks: the launch of the *Columbia* shuttle had been abandoned completely after one of its three engines failed three seconds before lift-off on March 22. Most of the 54 shuttle launches to date had experienced technical difficulties, and 14 had reached countdown only to be abandoned.

■ Last article p. 39347; reference article pp. 155-56

AVIATION

Air crash in India

An Indian Airlines Boeing 737 hit a lorry on the runway and burst into flames before takeoff at Aurangabad airport in the western Indian state of Maharashtra on April 26. There were 112 passengers on board and the death toll was over 60 (possibly as many as 84, according to Indian aviation officials).

According to aviation experts the safety record of Indian Airlines was regarded as one of the poorest among major carriers. Over the previous 20 years the airline had suffered 19 major disasters resulting in the deaths of more than 813 people [see p. 39299 for January 1993 incident in New Delhi involving an Uzbek Airlines jet leased to Indian Airlines].

■ Last article p. 39395; reference article pp. R148-49..

IN BRIEF

HUMAN RIGHTS: A report released on April 18 by the UN Human Rights Centre, affiliated to the UN Commission for Human Rights (UNCHR), said that at least half the world's population suffered serious violations of basic human rights, ranging from torture and executions to slavery and starvation.

NATO: Germany and the Netherlands on March 30 signed an agreement on the formation by 1995 of a 50,000-strong joint army corps under a unified command fully integrated into the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and open to other members [for Franco-German corps operating under the umbrella of the Western European Union see pp. 38931-32; 39250].

- AFGHANISTAN** Differences over Cabinet appointments - Renewed fighting 39413
- AFRICA** Trial of Bob Denard - Improved food situation 39404
- SOUTH AFRICA** Assassination of Chris Hani - Multiparty talks - Death of Treurnicht - Death of Tambo - Allegations of arms embargo breach 39398
- ALBANIA** Government reshuffle - Border incident - Foreign relations 39428
- ALGERIA** Operations against Islamists - Attacks on security forces - Approval of 1993 economic plan - Reversal of public-sector reforms 39437
- ANGOLA** Resumption of peace talks 39399
- ARAB REGIONAL AFFAIRS** Meeting of GCC Foreign Ministers - Arab League meeting 39440
- ARGENTINA** Major debt agreement 39411
- ARMENIA** New offensive against Azerbaijan 39424
- AUSTRIA** Visit of Chancellor to Kazakhstan 394
- AVIATION** Air crash in India 39443
- AZERBAIJAN** New Armenian offensive - Removal of Interior Minister - New Prime Minister 39424
- BANGLADESH** Citizenship of Azam 39421
- BENIN** Religious violence 39404
- BOLIVIA** Sentencing of former dictator - Trade agreement with Chile 39411
- BOSNIA-HERCEGOVINA** Bosnian Serb rejection of Vance-Owen peace plan - New Serb offensive - Croat-Muslim fighting - Vance successor 39425
- BRAZIL** Rejection of monarchy in plebiscite - Indictment of Collor - New economic plan 39410
- BULGARIA** Foreign relations 39428
- BURMA** Adjournment of national convention - Border agreement with India 39415
- BURUNDI** Presidential election dates 39404
- BYELARUS** Vote on CIS security treaty 39424
- CÔTE D'IVOIRE** Army discontent 39401
- CAMBODIA** Withdrawal of *Khmers Rouges* from Phnom Penh 39415
- CAMEROON** Calls for national conference 39401
- CANADA** Prince Edward Island elections - UN ruling on Quebec language laws 39408
- CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC** Resignation of minister 39404
- CHAD** Beginning of transition period 39402
- CHILE** Trade agreement with Bolivia 39411
- CHINA** Relations with USA - Historic meeting with Taiwan 39416 Resumption of talks between China and Hong Kong 39417
- COLOMBIA** Doubling of sentences for terrorism - Serious floods 39410
- COMMONWEALTH OF INDEPENDENT STATES** Extraordinary heads of government summit 39425
- COMOROS** Death sentences for coup plotters 39405
- COSTA RICA** Capture of terrorists 39412
- CROATIA** New government 39427
- CSCE** "Open Skies" agreement between Hungary and Romania 39442
- CUBA** Private US aid - Call by dissidents for revised US policy - Drug trafficking accusations - Death of senior PCC member 39408
- CYPRUS** Tension over shooting incidents 39434
- CZECH REPUBLIC** Relations with Germany - Relations with Slovakia - Opening of stock exchange - Bankruptcy law - Reduction of armed forces 39428
- DENMARK** Resignation of Faaro 39435
- EBRD** Annual meeting 39435
- ECUADOR** Devastating floods - Asylum for Venezuelan coup plotters 39411
- EFTA** Agreements with Czech and Slovak Republics 39435
- EGYPT** New Interior Minister - Sentencing to death of Muslim "extremists" - IMF talks 39438
- EL SALVADOR** Freeing of murderers of Jesuits 39409
- ENVIRONMENT** Gabcikovo dam dispute - Russian nuclear plant explosion - US decision to sign biodiversity treaty - Clinton's call for old-growth forests decision 39443
- ERITREA** Independence referendum 39403
- ESTONIA** Housing privatization bill 39435
- ETHIOPIA** Parliamentary expulsions 39403
- EUROPE** European co-operation conference 39435
- EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES** German and French interest rate cuts - Kohl-Balladur meeting - Growth plan - Ban on central European meat and dairy imports - Negotiations on Norwegian membership - Co-operation agreement with Slovenia 39435
- FINLAND** Resignation of Foreign Minister 39435
- FRANCE** New Speaker - Government programme - Police killings - PS leadership change 39432 Interest rates cut 39434
- THE GAMBIA** Abolition of death penalty 39405
- GATT** US-EC partial agreement on public procurement - Ruling against South Korea - New accessions 39441
- GEORGIA** Currency coupon - Relations with Ukraine - Abkhazia conflict 39424
- GERMANY** Relations with Czech Republic 39428 Ruling on use of German forces over Bosnia - Ballot on steelworkers' strike - Honecker trial - Relations with Russia 39433 Interest rates cut 39434
- GUATEMALA** Prison riot 39409
- HAITI** Rejection of UN-OAS proposals 39408
- HONG KONG** Resumption of China-UK talks 39417
- HUMAN RIGHTS** UN Human Rights Centre report 39443
- HUNGARY** New FIDESz chair - By-election - Military co-operation with Germany 39429
- ICRC** Anti-landmine campaign 39443
- IMF** New members 39441
- INDIA** Court ruling on dismissal of state government - Investigation into Bombay explosions - Bhopal trial - New army chief - Rao's visit to Thailand - Economy - States developments 39414 Air crash 39443
- INDONESIA** Military appointments - East Timor 39420
- INDUSTRIALIZED COUNTRIES** G-7 meeting on aid to Russia - G-7 Finance Ministers' meeting 39441
- IPU** New Delhi conference 39443
- IRAN** Currency reform - Fall in oil revenues - Relations with USA - Agreements with Croatia 39439
- IRAQ** UN weapons inspection - Sanctions crisis - US air attacks - Reported uprising - Opposition activities - New Kurdish government 39439
- IRELAND, NORTHERN** Proposal to restart talks - Meeting involving IRA - Talks between SDLP and Sinn Féin leaders - City of London bomb 39433
- ITALY** Referendums - New government 39430
- JAMAICA** New Patterson government 39409
- JAPAN** Cabinet changes - Economic developments - Foreign relations - Relations with Russia - Meeting between Miyazawa and Clinton - Imperial visit to Okinawa 39419
- KAZAKHSTAN** Joint oil venture with US company - Creation of naval force - Visit by Vranitzky 39413
- KENYA** Unfreezing of World Bank aid - Official parliamentary opposition - Opposition arrests 39403
- KIRGIZSTAN** New political alliance - Akayev's visit to Japan - Military agreement with Russia 39413
- KOREA, NORTH** IAEA declaration of "non-compliance" - Further promotion of Kim Jong Il - Meeting of national legislature 39417
- KOREA, SOUTH** Acceleration of anti-corruption drive 39418 GATT ruling 39441
- LATIN AMERICA** Group of Rio meeting 39412
- LEBANON** Fighting - Foreign relations 39437
- LESOTHO** New government 39399
- LIBYA** Renewal of UN sanctions - Kadhafi's speech on stricter implementation of sharia 39438
- LITHUANIA** Vilnius city council 39435
- MACEDONIA** Vote of confidence over name 39428
- MADAGASCAR** Diplomatic recognitions 39405
- MALAYSIA** Political developments in Sabah 39419
- MALI** Resignation of government 39402
- MEXICO** State elections 39408
- MIDDLE EAST** Resumption of peace talks - "Closure" of occupied territories 39436
- MONGOLIA** Nominations for presidential elections 39416
- MOZAMBIQUE** Postponement of elections 39400
- NAMIBIA** Cabinet changes 39399
- NEW ZEALAND** By-election humiliation for government 39421
- NICARAGUA** Release of US aid 39409
- NIGER** Controversial election of Speaker 39402
- NIGERIA** Presidential candidates - Controversial fuel subsidy 39401
- NORWAY** Negotiations on membership of EC 39434 Appointment of ministers 39435
- OIC** Foreign Ministers' meeting 39442
- OPEC** Meeting with non-OPEC members 39442
- PAKISTAN** Dismissal of Sharif government 39412
- PALESTINIAN AFFAIRS** Upgrading of PLO office in Luxembourg - US indictments 39437
- PAPUA NEW GUINEA** Incursions into Solomon Islands territory - Death of rebel leader - Measures against crime - Australian company's withdrawal from gold mine project 39421
- PERU** Military show of force - Military sentences over November 1992 coup attempt 39411
- PHILIPPINES** Presidential powers to tackle energy crisis - Renewed clashes with communist guerrillas 39420
- POLAND** Withdrawal of Peasant Alliance from government - Electoral law - Pensions and privatization legislation - Indictment of Jaruzelski - 50th anniversary of Warsaw ghetto uprising 39429
- ROMANIA** Union protest rallies 39430
- RUSSIA** Relations with Japan 39419 Referendum campaign - Constitutional issues - Other internal developments 39421 Clinton-Yeltsin summit 39423 Relations with Germany 39433 G-7 aid - Explosion at nuclear plant - Involvement in US space station 39443
- RWANDA** Continuing peace talks - Extension of government's term 39404
- SAARC** Annual summit 39421
- SEYCHELLES** Cabinet changes 39404
- SINGAPORE** Prime Minister's visit to China 39420
- SLOVAKIA** Relations with Czech Republic - HZDS negotiations with opposition 39429
- SLOVENIA** Co-operation agreement with EC 39434
- SPACE RESEARCH** Russian involvement in US space station 39443
- SPAIN** Calling of June general election 39431
- SRI LANKA** Assassination of Athulathumudali 39415
- SUDAN** Peace talks - Arrest of Mahdi 39403
- SURINAM** Coup threats 39410
- SWEDEN** Austerity measures 39433
- TAIWAN** Historic meeting with China - Violence in Assembly - US copyright demands 39417
- TAJIKISTAN** Death of former President 39414
- TANZANIA** Muslim disturbances - Cabinet changes - Multiparty by-election 39404
- THAILAND** Foreign relations 39415
- TOGO** Election timetable 39401
- TUNISIA** Ruling on status of LTDH - Human rights protest - Renaming of Communist Party 39437
- TURKEY** Relations with Albania 39428 Death of Özal - Succession struggle - Renewed left-wing offensive - Restrictions on private broadcasting - Controversy over increase in government shares - Rise in GNP and foreign debt - Foreign relations 39434
- TURKMENISTAN** Dismissal of minister 39421
- UKRAINE** Economic problems - Government appointments - Military leadership change 39425
- UNIDO** New Director-General 39442
- UNITED KINGDOM** Major's statement on economic recovery - One-day protest strikes 39433
- UNITED NATIONS** Admission of Macedonia 39442
- UNITED STATES** Unveiling of fiscal 1994 budget - Defeat for President over economic stimulus package - Corruption cases - Tailhook scandal - Mayoral primary election in Los Angeles - Election of NAACP leader - Convictions in Rodney King trial - Ending of Waco siege - Prison siege in Ohio - World Trade Center bombing 39405 Relations with Japan 39419 Clinton-Yeltsin summit 39423
- VENEZUELA** Presidential candidates 39412
- VIETNAM** Fresh controversy over MIA issue - Visit by German Foreign Minister - Visit by UN Secretary-General - Major oil deal 39416
- WESTERN SAHARA** Meeting on referendum 39440
- WHO** Continuing controversy over Nakajima - AIDS crisis in Eastern Europe - New memberships 39442
- YEMEN** General election 39440
- YUGOSLAVIA** Serbian endorsement of Bosnian peace plan - UN sanctions - Devaluation of dinar 39427
- ZAÏRE** Birindwa government 39400
- ZAMBIA** Cabinet purge - Debt write-off - Air tragedy 39400